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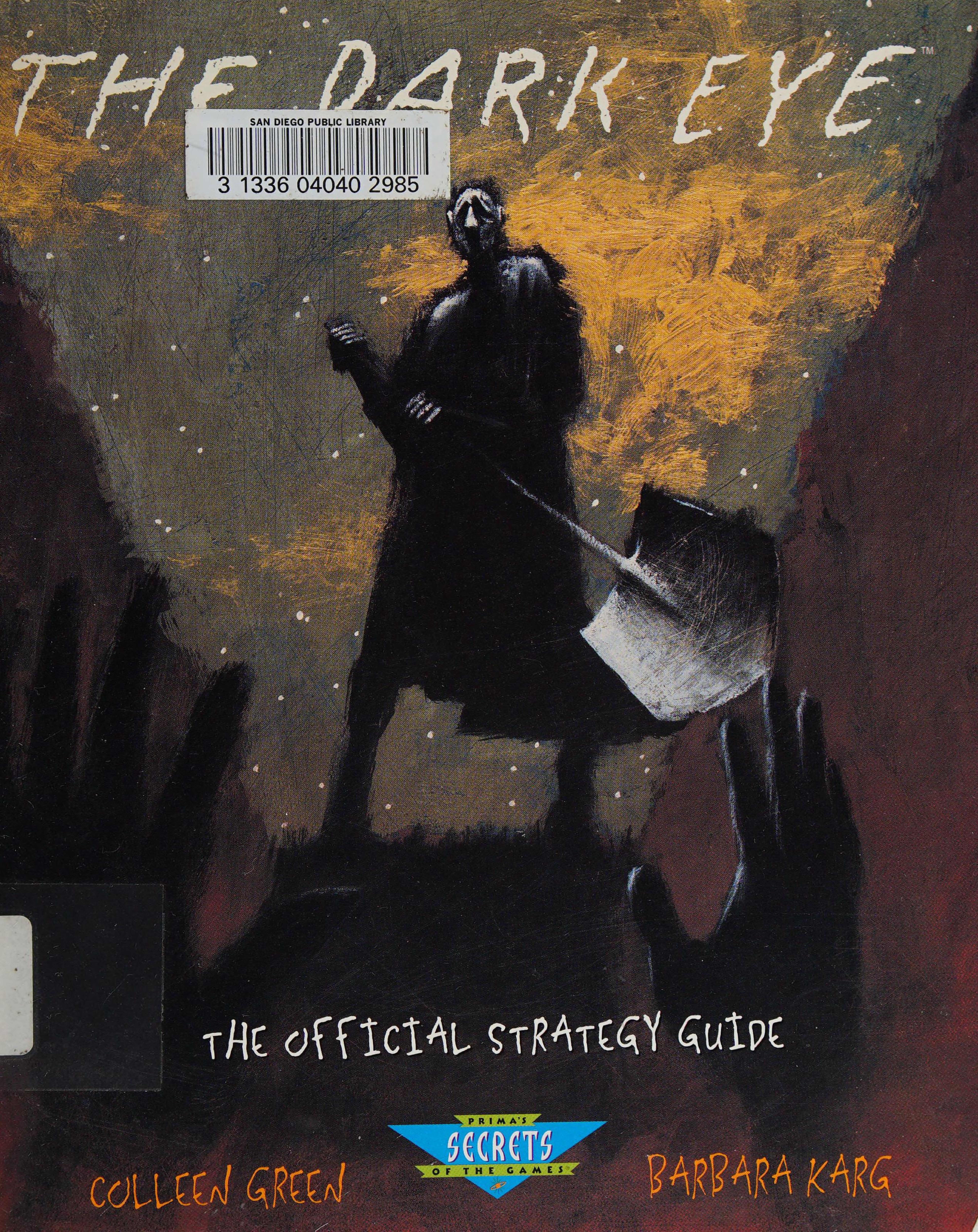

THE OFFICIAL STRATEGY GUIDE

PRIMA'S SECRETS OF THE GAMES

COLLEEN GREEN

BARBARA KARG

ISBN 0-7615-0346-3

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SEP 1996

The Dark Eye™

STORAGE

The Official Strategy Guide

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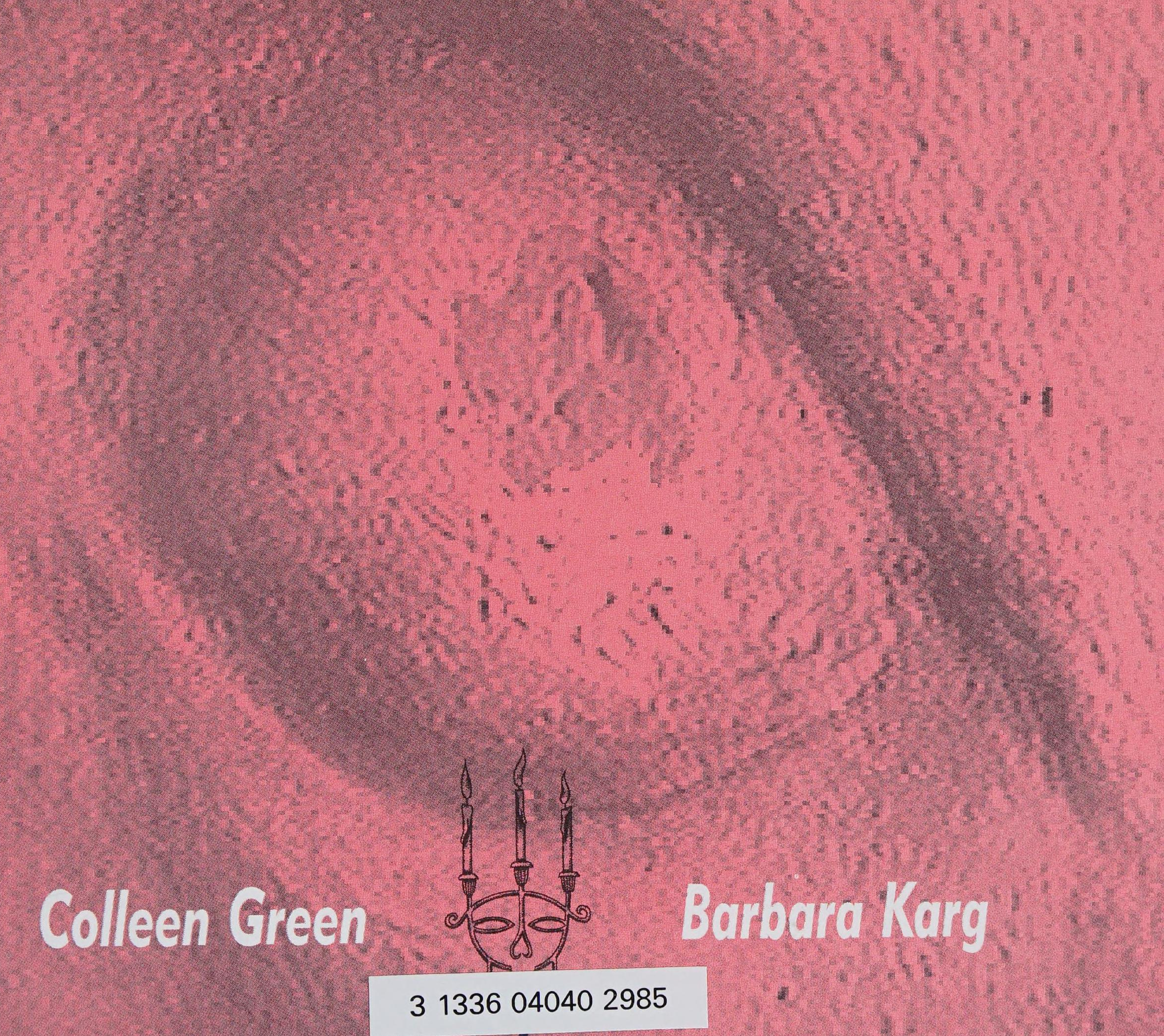
The Dark Eye™

The Official Strategy Guide



Colleen Green **Barbara Karg**

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ISBN: 0-7615-0346-3

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 95-70955
Printed in the United States of America

96 97 98 99 DD 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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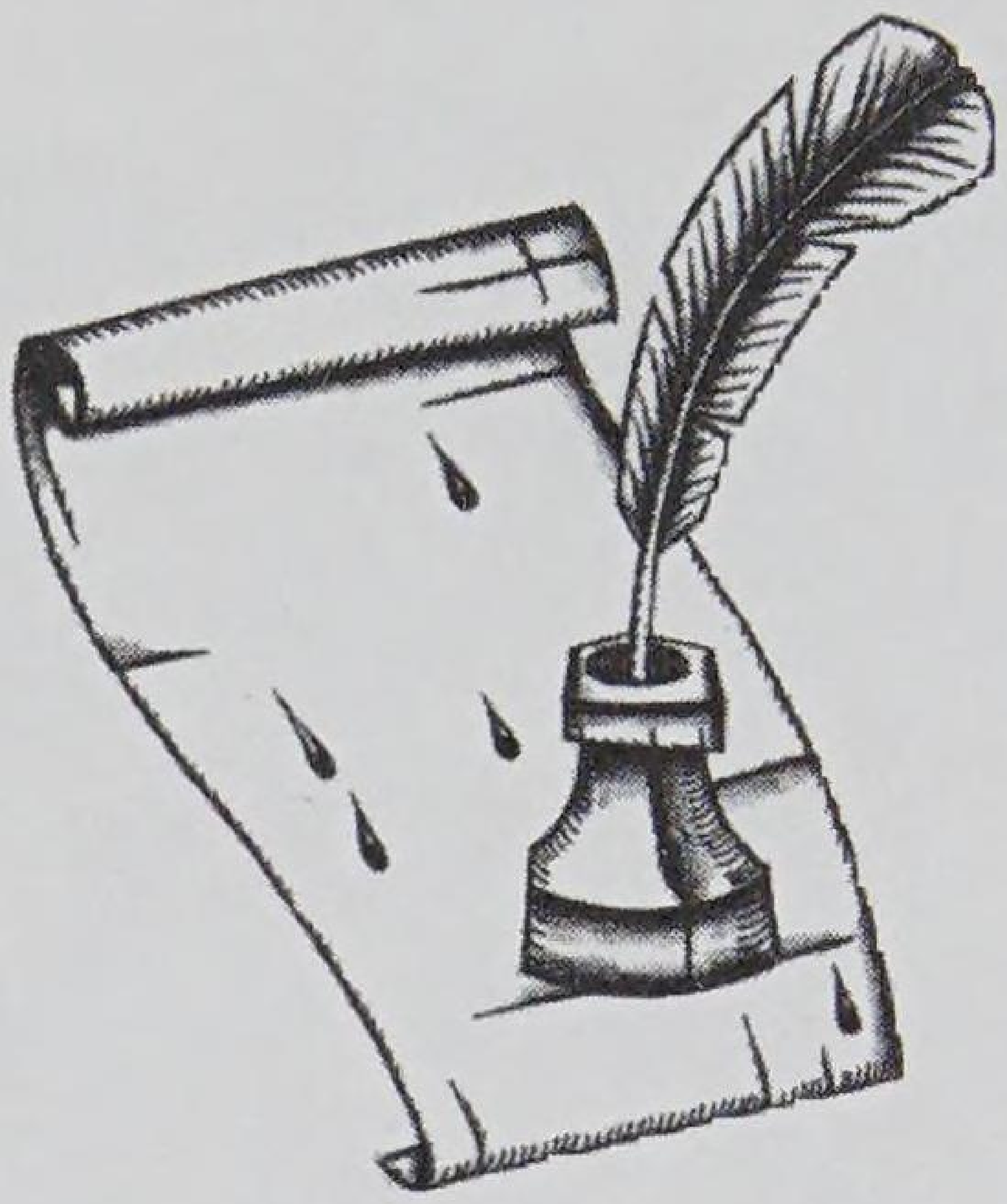
Foreword



Edgar Allan Poe wrote eighty or so tales in the course of his difficult life. A handful of those have such power that years after reading them, after having forgotten just who the characters were and just what happened, the mere mention of the titles can still conjure up images to chill any heart. When I proposed adapting the tales of Poe to interactive CD-ROM, I frankly had no idea how to go about it. All I knew was that his tales involved unusual and intriguing characters; and the stories themselves, often told in four or five pages, had indelibly powerful endings. If we could figure out a way for a player to explore the places, the characters' minds, and stories themselves, we'd have the kind of game I'd want to play. The Dark Eye is that game.

Poe's stories are all in the details, and our strategy for adapting them followed suit. The tales had to be "opened up" to user-driven exploration–but what players found needed to be grounded in Poe's vision at every moment. This challenge bled into every facet of the production, from period details to hand-painted textures, from sound effects and 3D rendering to the incredibly painstaking

Foreword

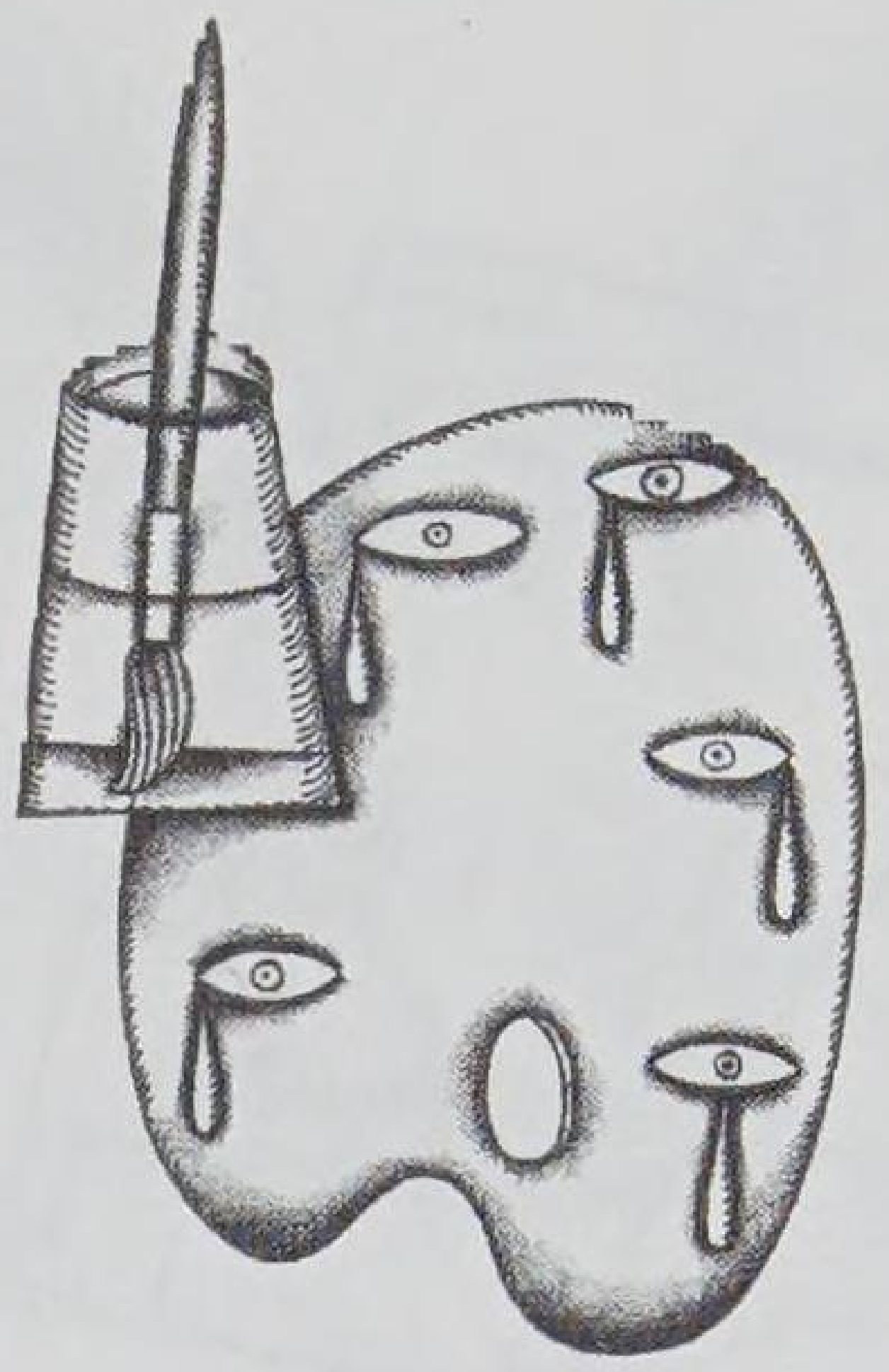
stop-motion animation process used to bring the characters to life. All our resources were trained on immersion, engagement, richness, and character-driven action. Many talented and creative people contributed their skills to this effort, and the results can be seen and heard in every image, every sound, and every animation on the disc.

If you are the murderer, you must kill. If you are the victim, you must be killed. Either way, it's not a happy ending. Enjoy.

Russell Lees
New York
September 1995

Erik Loyer
Los Angeles
September 1995

Acknowledgments



That writers operate from restless psyches is a universally known fact. Edgar Allan Poe understood this dark truth. So do we.

Like Poe, we often find ourselves walking the fine (and we mean fine) line between genius and madness. If we hadn't chosen this precarious profession–or had it not chosen us–we would, no doubt, be locked up somewhere in a rubber room analyzing MAD magazines and downing gummy bears.

Fortunately, we are joined in this eternal madness by an immeasurably talented group of individuals whose hard work and dedication to the art of fun is astonishingly refreshing.

The formidable team at Prima Publishing, as always, remains near and dear to our tell tale hearts. Special thanks go to Brett Skogen, for his unceasing friendship and devotion to the continuing saga of Babs and Clink, and to Mike van Mantgem, whose top notch professionalism and twisted wit always provide calm in the wake of a storm. To director of editorial services, Paula Munier Lee–our eternal partner in crime–we respectfully submit our heartfelt gratitude and the obligatory cases of chocolate, café and cabernet that sustain our collective sanities. We would also like to

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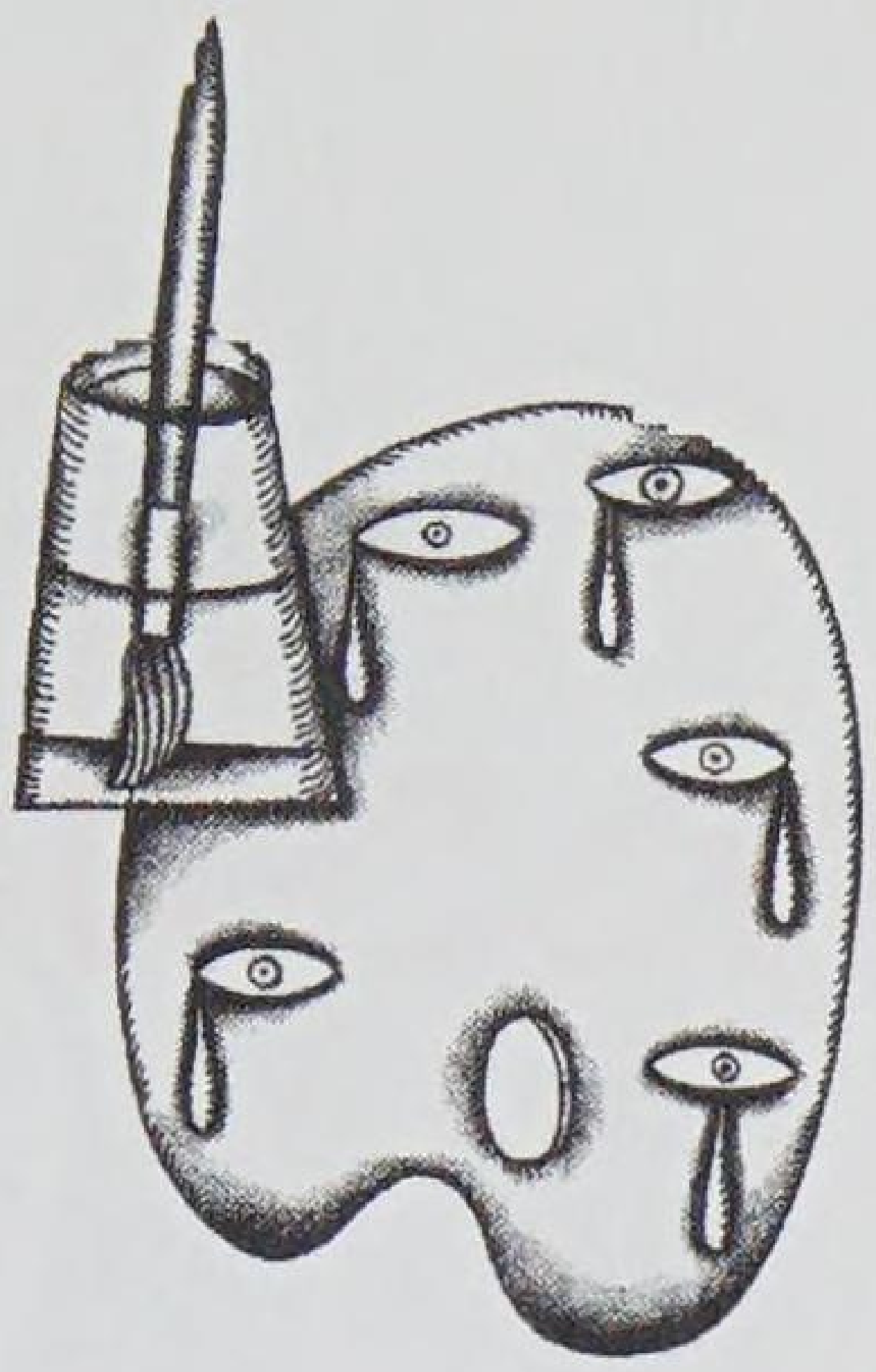


thank Hartley Lesser, Roger Stewart, Robin "I'll call ya right back" Lane and Andrew Mitchell for giving us the opportunity to unleash our creative energies on gamers the world over.

To the innovative cadre of folks at Inscape–including president Michael Nash, Dark Eye's creative force Russell Lees, Rebekah Behrendt, Melissa Hertz, Brock LaPorte, Erik Loyer, Charles Payne, Antonia Smithson, cover illustrator Bruce Heavin, icon illustrator Richard Downs, and the entire staff–we salute you! Your exceptional creation takes us on a journey into an exquisite world the likes of which would make even Master Poe frightfully proud, and, dangerously envious.

Last, but certainly not least, we would like to thank our families and friends. Despite the fact they have no choice but to put up with us, we continue to plod along in the hope that we will one day be able to keep them in a style to which they'd like to become accustomed.

Colleen Green Barbara Karg

October 1995

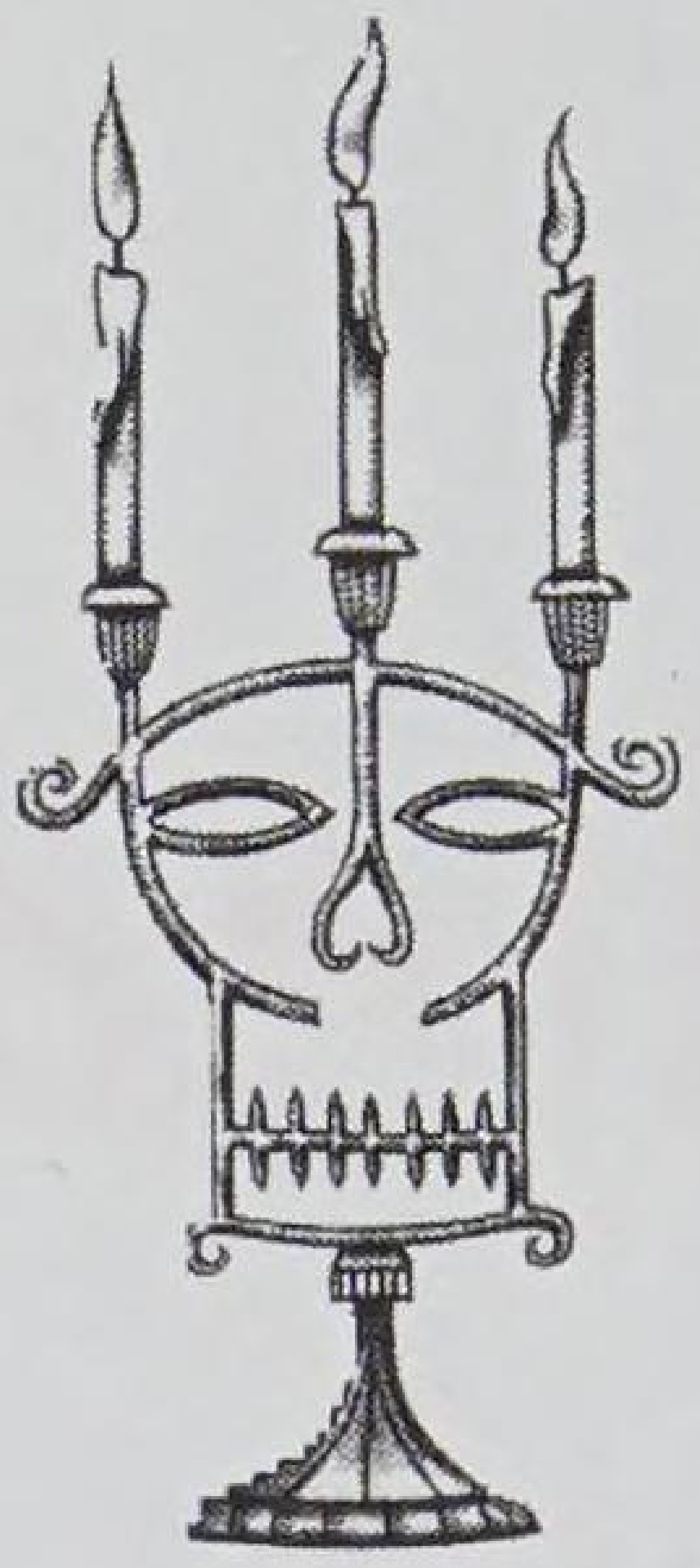
Dedication

"Is all we see or seem,
But a dream within a dream?"

This book is dedicated to dreamers everywhere.

And to Edgar Allan Poe, who is, no doubt,
smirking in his grave.

Introduction

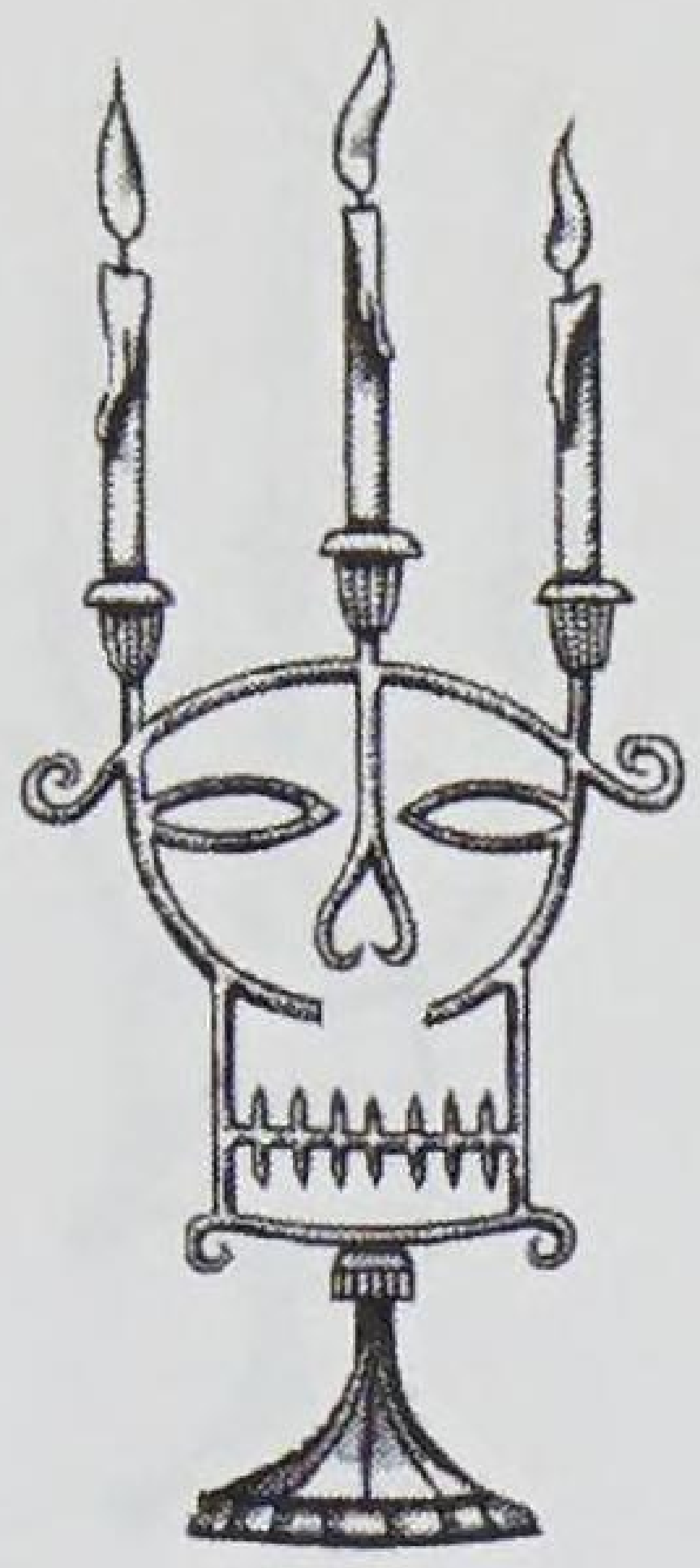


It is said that we have no choice but to accept a truth delivered by a dream–however removed from reality. In a dream, we willingly venture into fantastic and horrific realms and engage in bizarre encounters among strangers, completely estranged from our "real" lives. In our dream states, the known and the unknown meld into an unbelievable–yet strangely recognizable–world where anything is possible. Thus, when given the opportunity to experience spine-tingling nightmares while awake–from both the antagonist's and the victim's viewpoints–who wouldn't jump at the chance?

The Dark Eye takes you on just such an otherworld excursion. Beware! Do not alone and unprotected enter la Maison d'horreur–the house of horror–and the demented dens of The Dark Eye therein. Otherwise, you shall surely wander endlessly through mysterious environments for hours on end, your heart pounding, desperate to outrun your murderer or to commit your murderous deeds.

Come, let us guide you into the tortured psyches of each dream entity you embody–and through four chillingly vivid scenarios of madness. Together we shall journey into the twisted mind of Edgar Allan Poe and his modern-day cohort Russell Lees, and wind our

Introduction



way through claustrophobic rooms and dank passages, engaging in splendidly bizarre repartee' with a host of intriguing characters.

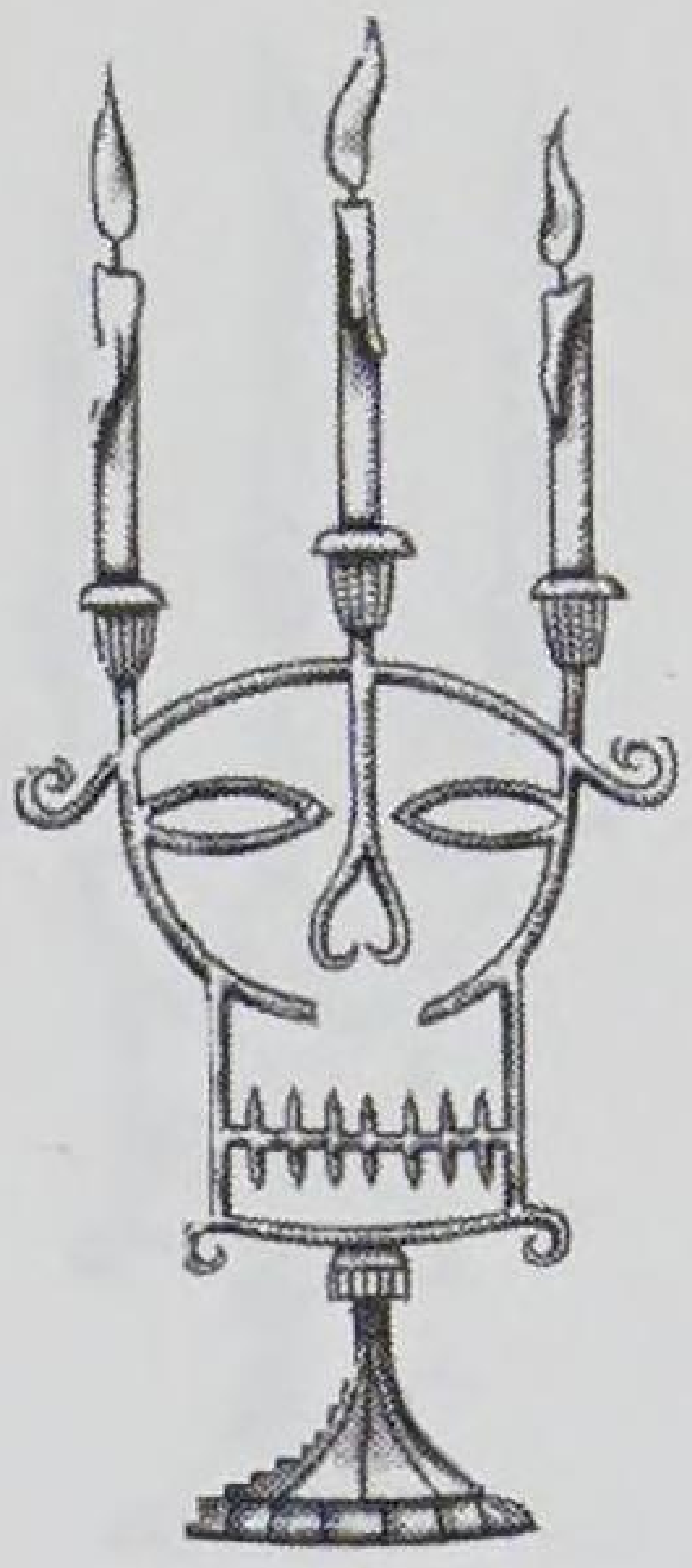
If you've already lost your way within the mansion of Malevolence, all that stands between you and dementia are the secrets contained within this book. Ne'er fear. Just hold on tightly to The Dark Eye: The Official Strategy Guide . . . or risk certain insanity.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

As die-hard Poe fans and spinners of horror ourselves, we figured, "Heh, twisted minds think alike. We'll fly through this baby like a bat out of Hell." NOT! With its richly layered worlds and myriad character and object interactions, The Dark Eye challenges the most crafty mind-gamer.

Part One of this strategy guide explains the objectives of the game and how all the tales fit together. It also details the important "technicalities" of gameplay. Mind Tricks and Sanity Savers are sprinkled throughout this part of the book. The Mind Tricks caution you of idiosyncrasies of the game. The Sanity Savers are helpful hints to guide you on your journey and to enhance your enjoyment of the game.

Introduction

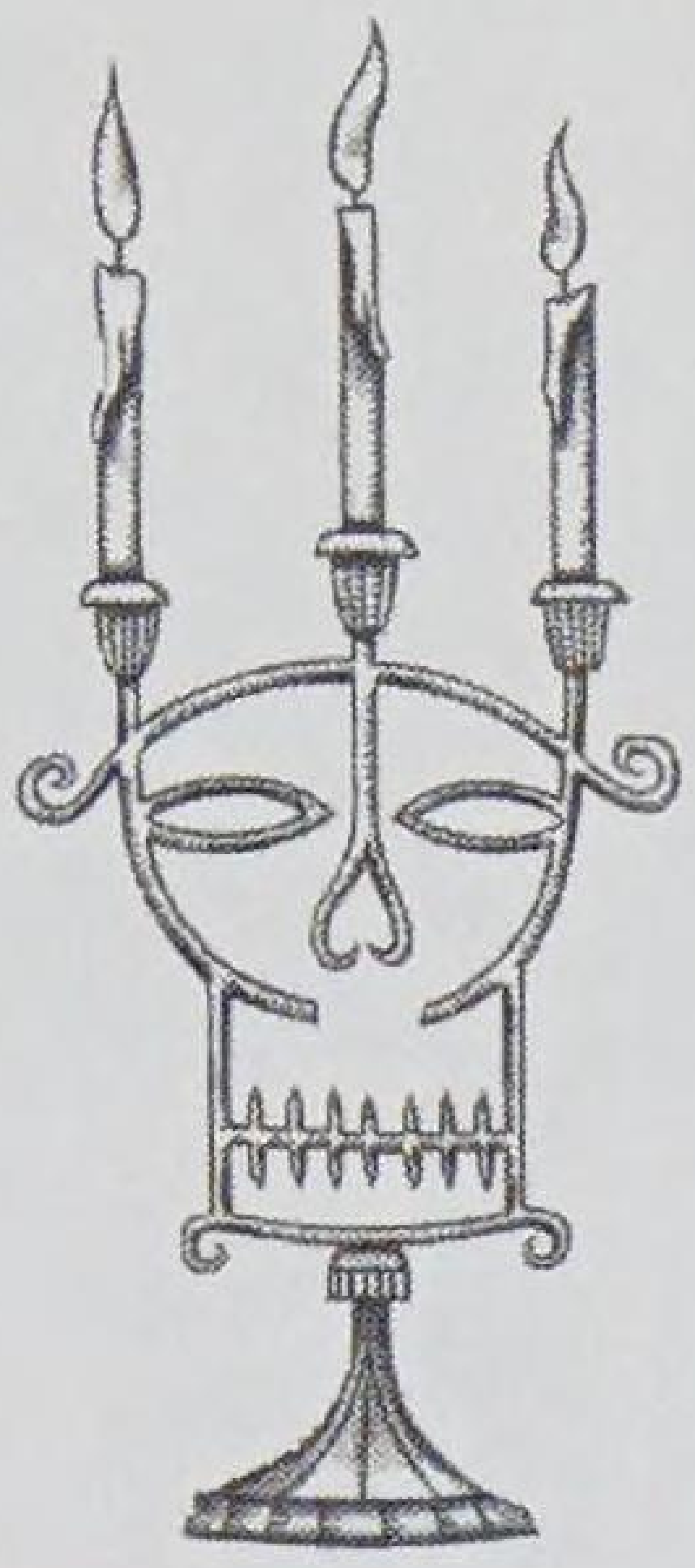


Half the fun (well, maybe a third) of any interactive role-playing game like The Dark Eye comes from delving into a character and solving the same puzzles yourself. In this strategy guide, we first weave a fictional walk through The Dark Eye. Through the entries in a Dream Journal of an unnamed Journeyer, you'll experience each The Dark Eye scenario. Along the way, you receive subtle clues to help you unravel the mysteries therein. Written in first-person narrative, the Dream Journal (Part Two) reveals not only the events as seen through the eyes of the beholder, but also the psychology (or psychosis, as it were) driving the pursuer or pursuee of malice.

The Dark Eye comprises four main scenarios and two graphic novels. The Journeyer experiences the first scenario, Malevolence, in "waking" mode, and the other three in "dream" mode. While dreaming, the Journeyer assumes the identity of each of the two main characters in his nightmares. The Dream Journal retells these dreams from this dreamstate perspective, first as the villain, then as the victim. It also recounts the Journeyer's nightmarish experiences in the waking world of Malevolence.

If you reach frustration overload using only the Dream Journal—please, don't climb up on the roof naked with an Uzi to take out

Introduction



your angst on unsuspecting neighbors (one of the more horrifying nightmares of a certain unnamed author). Instead, turn to Part Three of this book, the Quick Tour–a bare-bones walk-through of each scenario. The Quick Tour also includes Side Trips (game notes) that provide additional guidance on some of the more challenging and quirky aspects of the game. Of course, if you're one of those incredibly impatient types, you can start with the Quick Tour (party pooper!). But next time you play, go back and use the Dream Journal so you can delve into the twisted minds of your alter egos and more fully enjoy their perverse experiences.

No doubt, playing The Dark Eye will pique or renew your interest in Edgar Allan Poe's classic works. The Appendices give you a small sampling of the mystery master's works, along with a short biography of Poe's life.

Finally, you'll find a bonus four-color insert in the center of the book that includes a map of the Malevolence Mansion, a Phrenology Map (depicting a completed game), and a slew of gorgeous screen captures from The Dark Eye.

Read on, fellow dreamer, and let the play begin!

Let's Get Technical

Game Basics

Like most hearty gameplayers, you're probably dying to pop your *The Dark Eye* disk in the CD drive and *click* away. You're mouse-savvy, by George. What else is there to know? Come on, skip the technicalities; let's get busy! With a game as rich as *The Dark Eye*, who wouldn't want to just jump in blindly–including, we admit, ourselves. So, with our shamefaced confession of weakness in the dark eye of temptation, we humbly offer you these game basics.

Actually, *The Dark Eye* plays like a dream with fairly straightforward functionality. Though the game is not exactly linear, you must complete certain interactive events and scenarios in a certain order. Also, understanding the basic structure and objective of the game makes playing *The Dark Eye* all the more enjoyable.

Dream Weaver: Game Overview

The Dark Eye comprises one primary interactive scenario– Malevolence– within which are interwoven three interactive tales and two graphic novels. Each interactive tale contains two scenarios. You play the main scenario, six encapsulated scenarios, and both graphic novels. Think of it as eight bad hypnagogic hallucinations within one long, convoluted nightmare.

In Malevolence, you assume the role of an unnamed Journeyer, who describes the events that take place during his strange and, to some, deadly, visit with his peculiar clan of relatives. During his stay at his Uncle Edwin's malevolent mansion, the Journeyer wanders in and out of the six different dreamstates. In this dreamstate, he becomes either the person pursued by or the person pursuing malice. While dreaming, the Journeyer also witnesses two vivid and disturbing psychodramas (the graphic novels) that play out in his mind's eye like an insidious night terror.

The three scenarios and the two graphic novels are all based on the works of Edgar Allan Poe by the same name. (Malevolence is an original tale authored by Russell Lees). *The Dark Eye* encompasses these five tales that weave in and out of Malevolence. The Poe tales are:

- **The Tell-Tale Heart (two scenarios)**
- **Berenice (two scenarios)**
- **The Cask Of Amontillado (two scenarios)**
- **Annabel Lee (graphic novel)**
- **The Masque Of The Red Death (graphic novel)**

You begin each new game in Malevolence. You can play the other six scenarios in any order you choose, and you can play the graphic novels any time after reaching a certain point in the game. After completing the three dream scenarios and the two graphic novels *in toto*, you progress to the endgame–the Malevolence climax.

Here's how it works: You enter the Malevolence mansion and complete the first prescribed "waking" sequence. Then, you go back and forth between Malevolence and the other "dream" scenarios. After you complete a dream scenario, you automatically enter the next sequence of Malevolence. The objective is to play each dream world tale from both the victim's and the villain's point-of-view. It doesn't matter which dream world or scenario you play first.

For example: First, enter and complete the first sequence of Malevolence. Second, enter *The Tell-Tale Heart* as the Boarder (whom we've affectionately dubbed *Norman*) and complete that dream scenario. Third, play the next sequence of Malevolence. Then, assume the identity of the Old Man (we call him *Cy*) and complete the second scenario of *Tell-Tale*–or go to another scenario altogether, playing the role of either the murderer or the prey in *Berenice* or *The Cask of Amontillado*.

Altogether, you complete six dream scenarios and seven Malevolence waking sequences. The seventh and final Malevolence sequence comprises the end game. You do *not* need to play the two graphic novels in order to reach the endgame, but you must complete the six previous Malevolence sequences (in linear order), as well as all six of the dream scenarios (in any order).

We recommend that you "experience" the two graphic novels during gameplay. You can enter *Annabel Lee* or *The Masque of the Red Death* while in the "blue" dreamstate following completion of a Malevolence sequence and *before* beginning the dream scenario of your choice. *Annabel Lee* can be accessed after you enter the first dreamstate, *Red Death* after you enter the second one. For plot continuity, follow the queues in the Dream Journal.

Alternately, you can complete all of the scenarios straight through the endgame without playing the graphic novels, then activate the novels from the Phrenology Map. To do this, quit to the Phrenology Map and click on the icon corresponding to the graphic novel you want to play. Actually, you don't have to play the graphic novels at all.

How do you know when you've completed the requisite Malevolence sequence, and it's time to enter another dreamstate? Don't worry; you'll know. Whenever your world suddenly transforms from daylight to twilight–and whispering voices echo maniacally–and reality slips from your grasp . . . go for it. Just look for your reflection in a specific object, caress it, and *Poof*! You transport to another dimension.

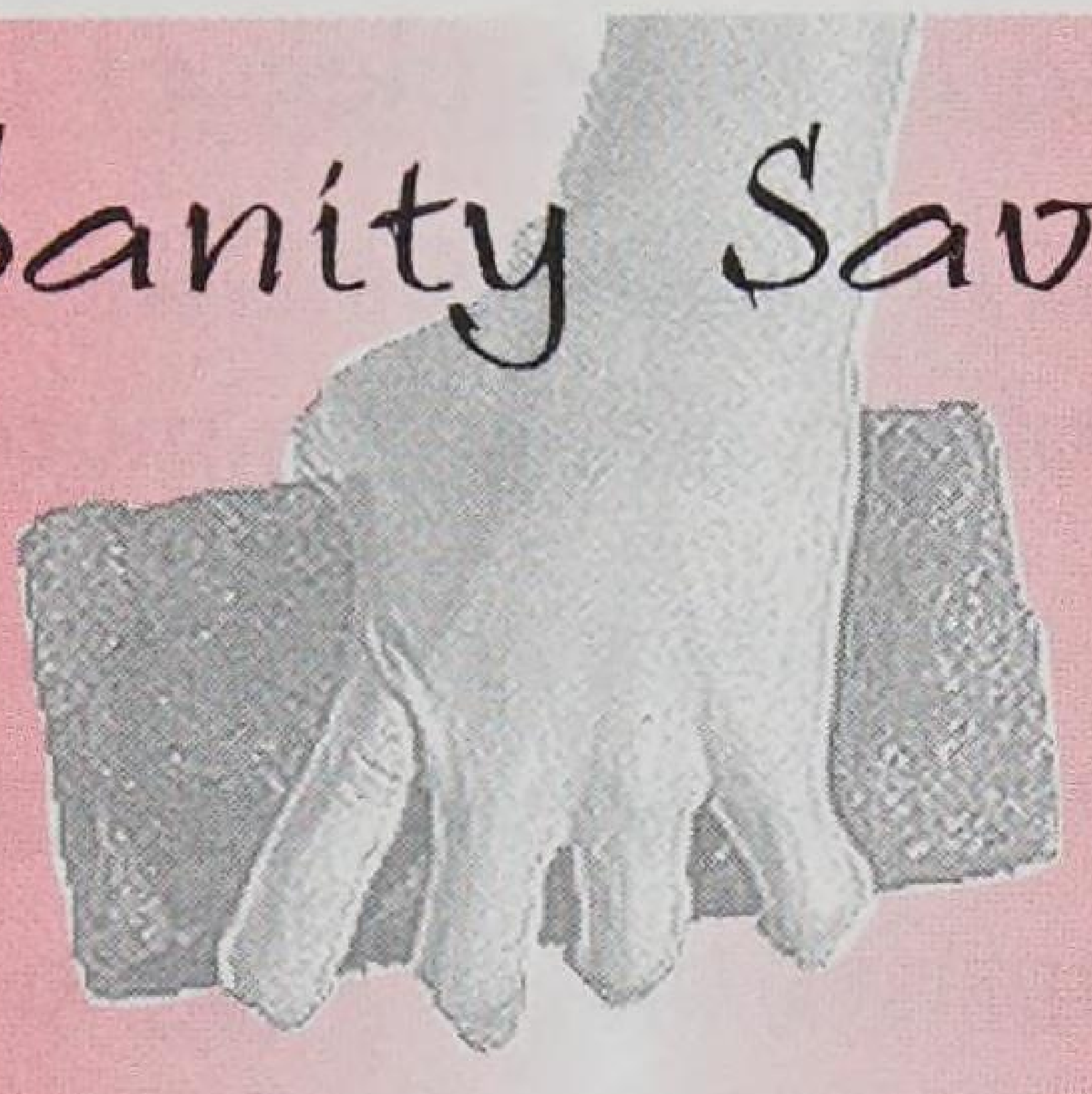
Take a few minutes to study the layout of the mansion included in the color insert of this strategy guide. Each time you enter a dream state, you enter a completely new environment. You initiate each Poe-based scenario and graphic novel from the Malevolence mansion, and wind up there upon completing each dream state. Aside from the mansion map, your only directions for navigating through *The Dark Eye* scenarios reside within the pages of the Dream Journal and the Quick Tour.

Remember, in order to reach the endgame, you must complete all six rounds of the three scenarios and the subsequent Malevolence sequences. Only then can you play out the final scene of Malevolence and uncover the ghastly events that transpire in the deceptively benign-looking mansion by the sea.

Mind Trick

You must actually start each new game from Malevolence. Your game is automatically saved as you progress through the experience. Internally, each story is broken down into a series of narrative "blocks." If you exit the game completely, then upon restoring that saved game you will be returned to the beginning of the narrative block you were in. This usually requires you to redo some interactions, but is akin to jumping back a few pages when you pick up a book you've started to re-establish a context. If you re-enter a tale which you have already completed, you are taken to the beginning of that tale. If you check the Phrenology Map or Options Screen, then return to your tale without quitting, you are returned to the exact moment in time when you left.

Sanity Saver



Since, technically, you don't have to play the graphic novels, you might be tempted to skip over them. Don't. Sit back, relax, and enjoy the show—which is, in itself, quite impressive. These graphic novels put good old Uncle Edgar in a whole new perspective, and listening to William S. Burroughs' delightfully perverse narration of Annabel Lee and The Masque of the Red Death is better than a snifter of witches brew.

Cool Hand Cursor

The pasty-looking hand that appears on your screen whenever you fire up *The Dark Eye* represents your cursor, navigating you through the abstruse worlds therein. To move about these dominions, simply point this cursor in the direction you want to go, and click your mouse.

You can also use the cursor to "feel" your way around each screen to identify objects with which you must interact. If you wave your hand over an object or try to go in a certain direction and the hand becomes translucent, hang it up. When the hand becomes translucent, that means you cannot interact with that object or navigate in that direction–at that time.

In *The Dark Eye*, the cursor also lends a helping hand in a few unique ways. For example, you can use it to grab a pickaxe, open a door, pound a coffin lid, or elicit a deranged thought.

Pointing The Way

The Dark Eye allows you five different directions of character (or object) movement: forward, left, right, up, and down. The pointed forefinger of the cool hand cursor leads the way.

- **Forward Cursors. Enable you to move forward; Straight ahead; Forward Right; Forward Left.**
- **Left Cursor. Enables you to turn to the left.**
- **Right Cursor. Enables you to turn to the right.**

NOTE: *The Left and Right cursors are occasionally used to indicate that you can take a step away from a close-up view of an object or character.*

- **Up Cursor. Enables you to look or stand up**
- **Down Cursor. Enables you to look, sit or stoop down**

The straight ahead Forward cursor and the Up cursor might look similar, but obviously, they produce different results.

- **Caress Cursor. Gently caress the object or character, rocking the cursor from side-to-side two or three times, to evoke a dream or memory. The caress triggers a response that reveals the current narrator's private retrospection.**

- **Grasp Cursor. Place this cursor over the object and click on your mouse to open or grab it. If this maneuver results in your picking up an object, click on the mouse again to release the item from your hand.**

The Dark Eye cursor (usually from grasp mode) also initiates a variety of specific object interactions throughout the game, including:

- **Knock on Door.**
- **Lay Bricks.**

In a few instances, you must click and drag the mouse to execute the interaction; for example:

- **Fasten Chain**
- **Open/Close Lantern Shutter**

Clicking on certain objects (again, usually from grasp cursor mode) places them in your hand. When this happens, the object in-hand appears in the foreground—that is, up close and larger in size. This typically is followed by an additional interaction, which may consist of carrying the object to another location, replacing the object, or performing a very specific interaction with it. A few examples follow:

- **Write Letter**
- **Carry Lantern**

Keep in mind that some object and character interactions vary from scenario to scenario, and from scene to scene within a scenario. As you trip through the worlds of *The Dark Eye*, continually investigate and repeatedly try to interact with the folks and items you stumble upon along the way. Open doors and drawers, examine books and paintings, look for clues and murder weapons. Leave not a single object unturned and unturned again.

Mind Trick

The caress cursor can be a fickle feature. Sometimes the slightest wave triggers the interaction, and you accidentally do something you didn't want to do at all, or at least not then. Other times, you repeat the motion so many times before the memory or thought activates, you wonder if maybe the poor soul recently underwent a lobotomy.

Sanity Saver

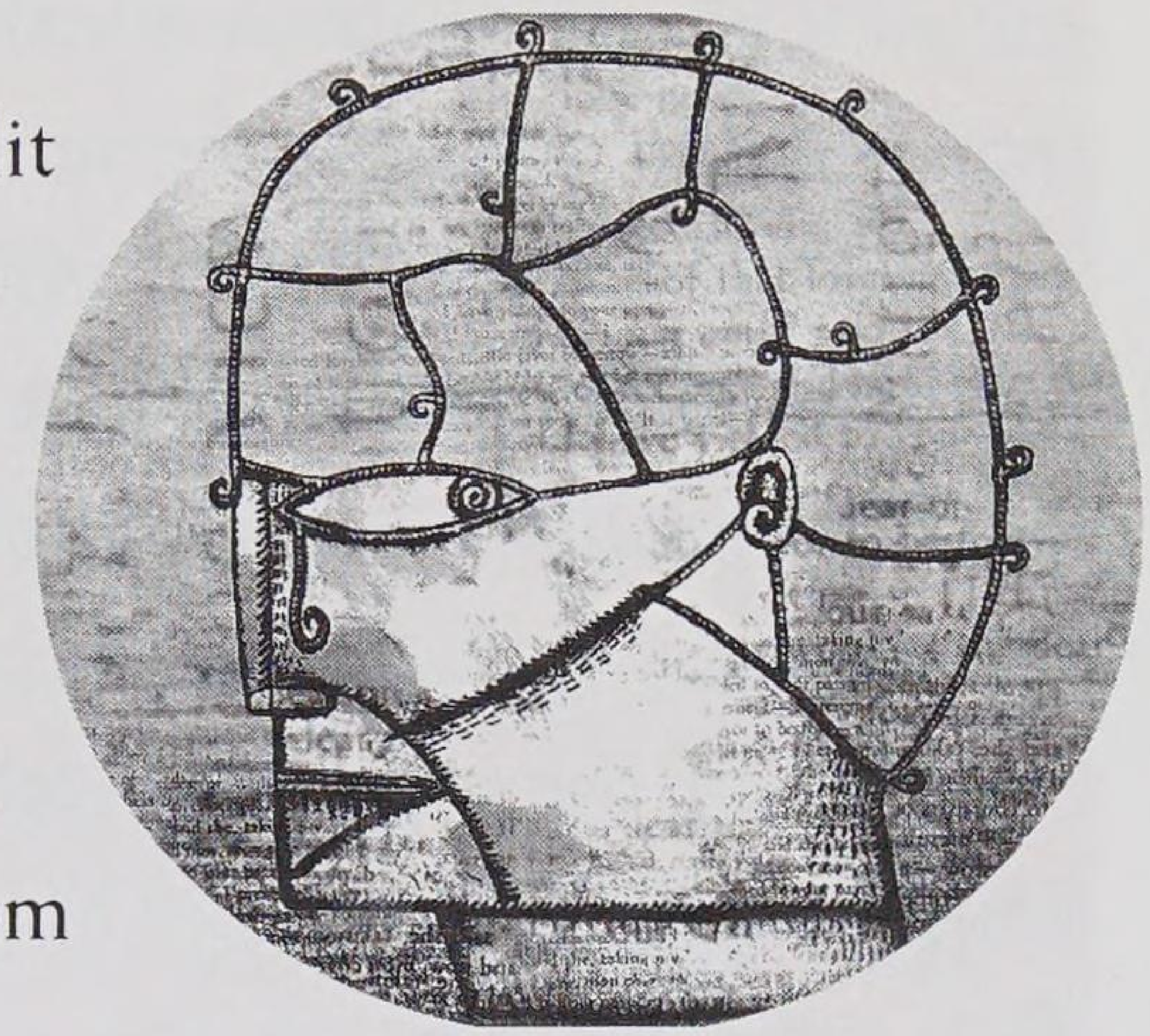
Don't be shy. Caress the objects of your attentions over and over again. Otherwise, you're likely to skip a critical interaction—and find yourself trapped forevermore in The Dark Eye halls of Hell. Saints preserve you if you miss something in Montresor's catacombs or Egaeus' study! Several objects invoke two or more different responses. Others give you the same schpiel every time you lay hands on the buggers. Still others allow you one maul and that's all. As a rule-of-thumb, go back for seconds of each object you encounter during a specific scene. When you move to a new scene or room, try to interact with every object there, even if it activated in a previous scene. If you get a response, go ahead and make your next move. What can you lose, other than a few seconds of your time?

Mind Games: The Phrenology Map

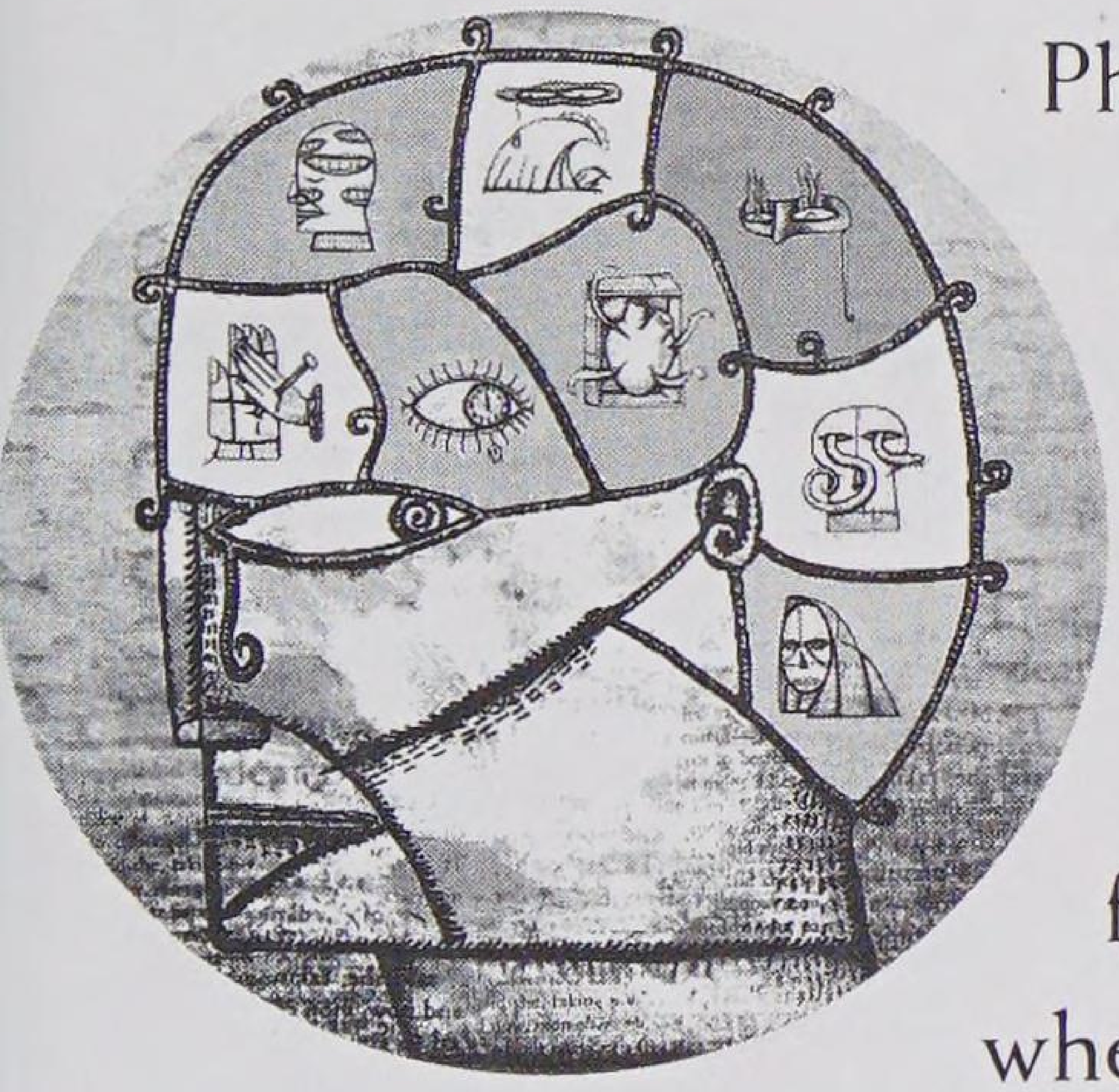
It is surely no coincidence that those of a, shall we say, fragile disposition, such as Edgar Allan Poe, often tend to be fascinated with the study of the mind. During Poe's lifetime in the 1800s, this "science" took the form of phrenology. The learned phrenologist would, quite literally, examine the subject's head and then create a detailed psychological profile based on the shape of the skull. They called this "personality study" a Phrenology Map. (Sound far-fetched? Well, imagine what the good citizens of this planet will make of the Rorschach "ink blot" test some 200 years from now! *What do you see?* Get out of town! They *all* look like deformed spiders to us.)

In true Poe-like fashion, you enter and plot your course through *The Dark Eye* scenarios. The Phrenology Map appears after you select the Begin option on the main screen or after you quit out of any scenario (or graphic novel).

When you start a new game—by selecting New, typing in a name for that game, then selecting Begin on the main screen–a blank Phrenology Map appears. Note that the eye–which represents your Malevolence waking world–is backlit. Click on the lit Evil Eye to start your new game. Until you make some headway on your sojourn through *The Dark Eye*, this is your only option.



The Phrenology Map begins each new game. Note the lit Evil Eye. As you play each dream scenario, its corresponding icon appears on the Phrenology Map. These icons remain on the map only if you finish the tale. If you want to return to a previously completed scenario, simply click on its icon in the Phrenology Map. Entering a previously completed scenario restarts it from the beginning.



Phrenology Map displaying all scenario icons. Note the backlit icon, indicating the last scenario played (*The Tell-Tale Heart* from Norm's point-of-view).

You can only advance to the next Malevolence waking sequence by completing a new (previously unfinished) scenario. New scenarios must always be entered from the Malevolence "blue" transition state. As a reminder, when you reach this state, three things happen:

- **Your waking world suddenly switches to blue tones, as if cast in twilight.**
- **All your friendly and not-so-friendly relations (including Ambers) mysteriously disappear.**
- **A cacophony of hushed voices reverberates throughout the house.**

These are your signal to seek out a portal to one of the dream scenarios or graphic novels. The first section of the Quick Tour identifies these portals and describes how to enter each scenario or graphic novel.

The Dark Eye's auto-save feature saves your game every time you complete or escape out of a scenario, automatically storing any progress you've made in all scenarios up to that point. If you end the turn by completing a dream scenario and don't enter another one before exiting, when you restart the game the Evil Eye on the Phrenology Map lights up. You can still choose to enter any of the icons on the Phrenology Map, not just the Evil Eye. If you've successfully completed that particular scenario, however, you just repeat it.

Icons for the graphic novels you witness as you sleepwalk through *The Dark Eye* also appear on the Phrenology Map. These operate exactly like those of the dream scenarios. Turn to the insert to see a full-color picture of the Phrenology Map with all its marbles–or rather, icons–intact. Take a good look, because chances are, you won't see it on your computer screen any time soon.

What all this boils down to is this: You can wander around, switch back and forth between the different dream and waking states whenever you want, as much as you want, to your little tell-tale heart's content.

Soul Searches

This feature lets you take a walk–or in the case of *The Dark Eye*–a flight of fancy into the other guy's boots . . . midstream, no less. You can swap souls with the other main character in any of the six dream scenarios. For example, you start out playing Berenice in "Berenice." As you go along, you can't help but wonder, "Who *is* this Egaeus guy, and what exactly *is* his problem?" Or maybe all her swooning and swaying has given *you* a mean bout of vertigo. So, you take on his identity for a while or for the rest of the scenario if you choose.

Sanity Saver

You might run into a confusing snafu switching back and forth between dream scenarios. Let's say you get hopelessly lost halfway (you think) through the dank catacombs of The Cask of Amontillado—which is easy enough to do. (Moi? Lost? Hrmph!) Simply quit back to the Phrenology Map, because you want to continue playing—but not The Cask of Amontillado, anything but the Cask, please! Click on the Evil Eye to re-enter Malevolence, which should still be in the transition state, and transport yourself to a whole new scenario. Or, choose an icon from the Phrenology Map of a scenario more in-tune with your current state of mind. The next day, after a good night's sleep, during which you fairly waltzed through those bloody catacombs, you decide to go back and tackle Cask. But when you bring up the Phrenology Map for your saved game, lo' and behold, the icon for that scenario has mysteriously disappeared. Seriously. This has happened to us more than a few times.

Don't panic. Just go back to Malevolence. Find your way back to where your abandoned scenario began, find your reflection in the appropriate object, and caress it. If you were playing Montresor in The Cask of Amontillado, go to the Conservatory and caress the wine bottle. In the blink of an eye, you'll find yourself right back to the point from which you left—smack dab in the middle of those maddening catacombs. The same principle applies for any icon that removes itself from the Phrenology Map when you play the switching scenario game.

Sound complicated? It's not. As long as you watch your screen carefully and are nimble with your mouse, soul jumping is a snap. When you see the other character's eyes start to twinkle and your reflection staring back at you, click on their eyes. You've got only five seconds (10 at most), though. So if you want to morph into another lost soul, jump on it.

You can soul jump only at specific times. Every scenario except *The Tell-Tale Heart* allows you to jump from one character to another and then back again. *Tell-Tale* gives you just one opportunity to jump. The Dream Journal and the Quick Tour tell you when each soul-jumping opportunity presents itself.

Some people prefer to play the same role straight through the entire scenario. Some (the more retentive among us) insist on playing one scenario, then the other of each tale, methodically making their way through each scenario and through to the endgame as fast as they can. These folks just gotta' win. When you take this tact with *The Dark Eye*, however, you stand to lose more than you gain. Soul jumping gives you the chance to delve deeper into the psyches of each lead character. It adds texture and entertaining twists to the tale. It brings a unique interactive, cinematic, storytelling magic to the whole *The Dark Eye* experience.

So, come on. Check it out. Hey, it worked for Whoopi in *Ghost*!

Travel Tips

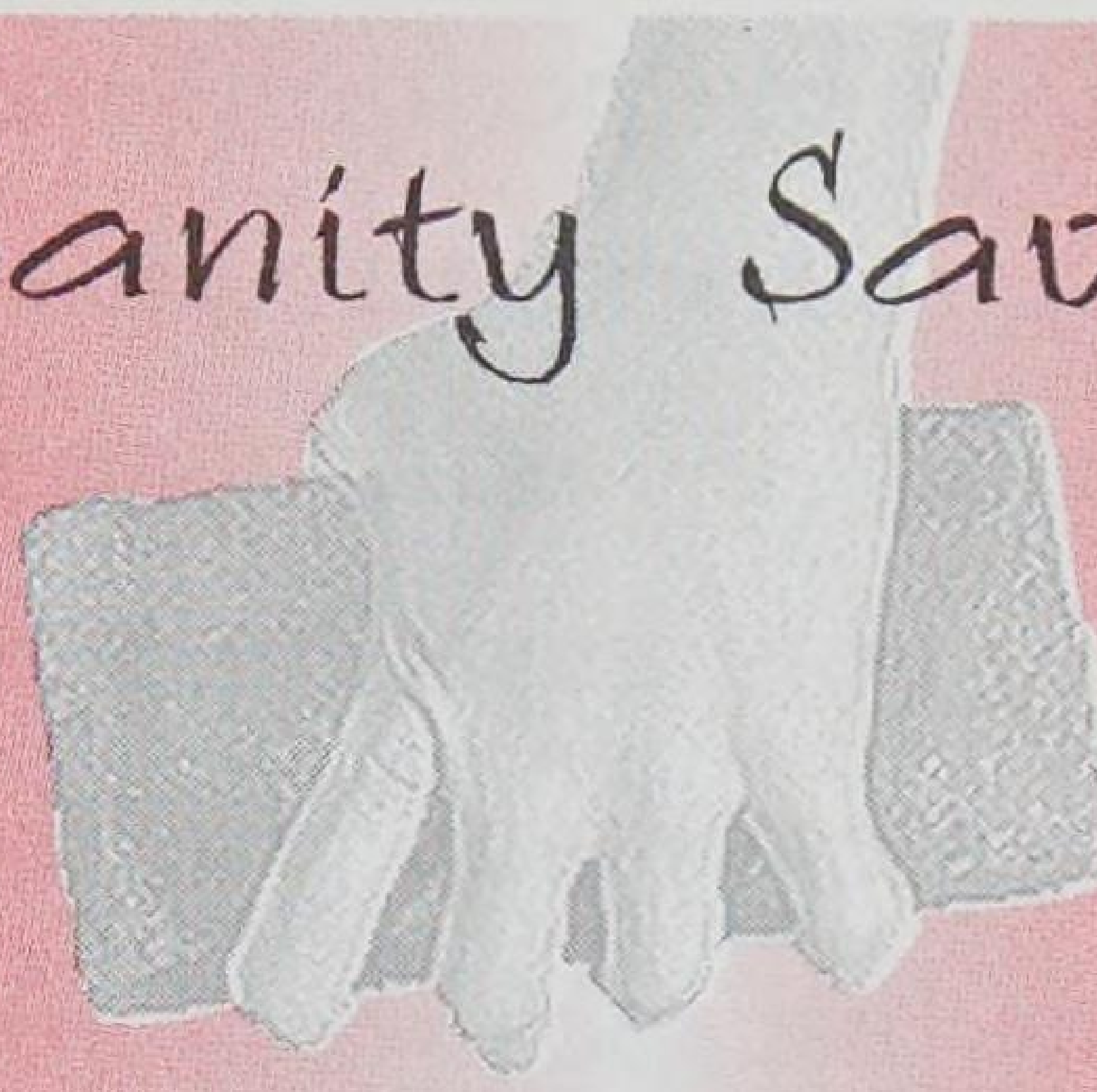
The Dark Eye gameplay consists primarily of straightforward, intuitive mouse control. After reading through this section–and with your Dream Journal (or Quick Tour, scaredy cat!) and the map of the mansion under your arm–you should be well prepared to make your way through the maze of madness with your mind more or less intact. These tips won't make or break your game, but they may ease a minor frustration or two.

- **To Speed Up Gameplay**
  Press the T key to turn off transitions. This enables you to switch faster from one view to another, cutting rather than dissolving between them. This makes more of an impact on a PC than on a MAC. Even with the PC, the increase is minimal. Press T again to turn transitions back on.

NOTE: *A significant number of character animations depend on transitions, turning them off has more of an effect than just speeding up navigation. In most cases it won't have an adverse effect, but on occasion it can alter the timing.*

- **To Adjust Sound Volume**
  Press any key on your numeric pad to increase or decrease the volume, with 1 being lowest and 9 being loudest. Press 0 to turn off the volume.

Sanity Saver

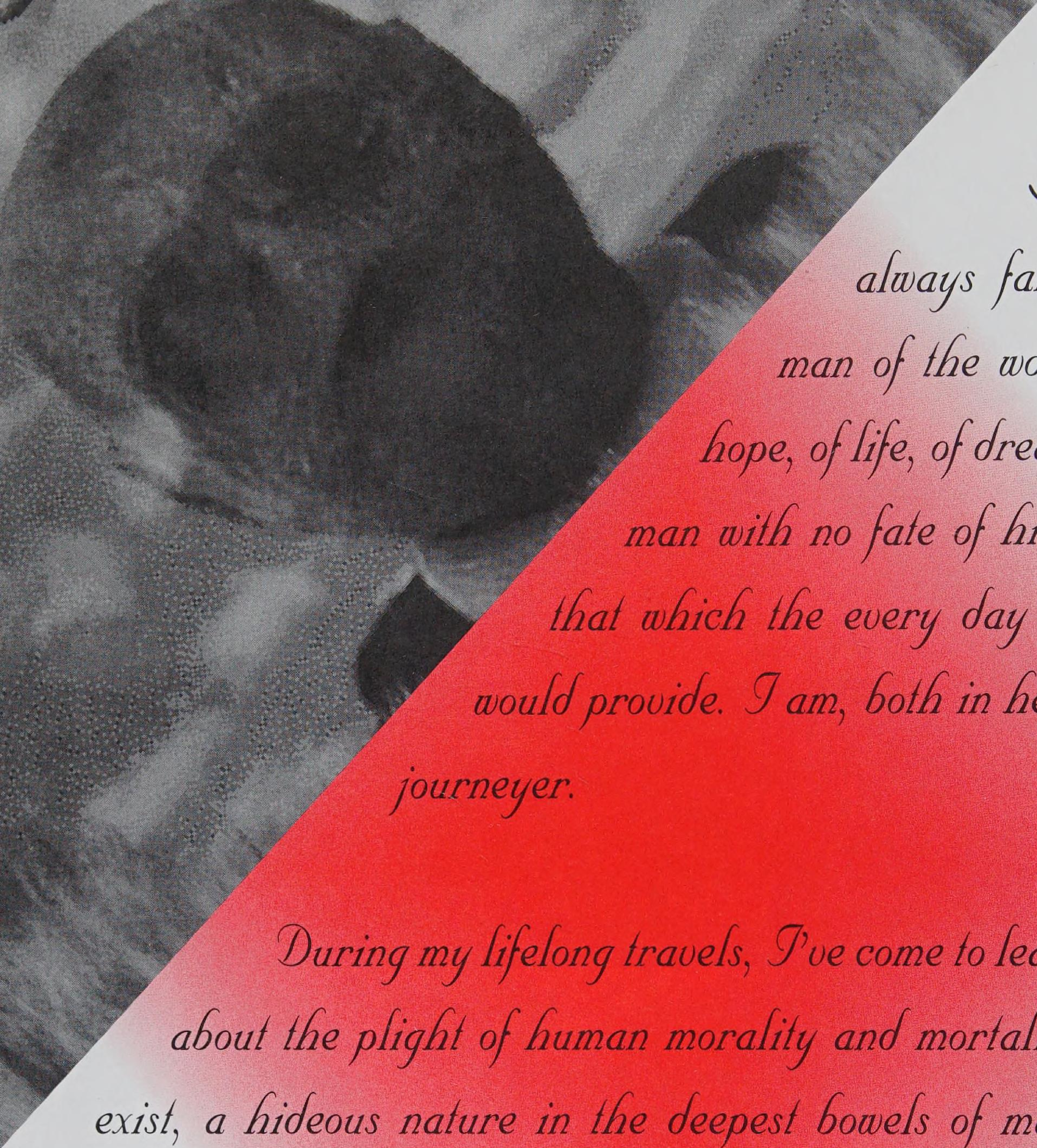


When interacting with objects and characters in The Dark Eye, be patient. We said, Be patient! Allow enough time for the entire interaction to play out. Resist the urge to plow ahead after a single event unfolds or at a pregnant pause in the character's dialog or actions. Otherwise, you risk interrupting the interaction midstream. And if you do, it can screw up the sequence. This prevents you from completing subsequent interactions and forces you to repeat the interrupted interaction. In some cases, you're made to go back and repeat interactions that preceded the interrupted one. Talk about trying one's patience!

Finally, *The Dark Eye* performs well with 8 MB RAM, assuming you've configured your system properly and optimized it to run lean and mean with plenty of working memory. If you have 8 MB RAM on a system loaded to the hilt with applications software and/or improper system configuration, performance goes to hell in a handbasket. Play *The Dark Eye* on a clean system pumped with 12 MB or more of RAM, and this baby shines! If you can do it, follow Inscape's recommendation and upgrade your memory configuration to greater than 8 MB. We're all going to have to jack up the RAMs sooner or later, if we want to enjoy richly textured and challenging games like *The Dark Eye* and its followers. (We'll be ready and waiting, Inscape!)

For any technical problems you might experience, call Inscape at: 800-741-3043

And tell 'em Edgar sent you!



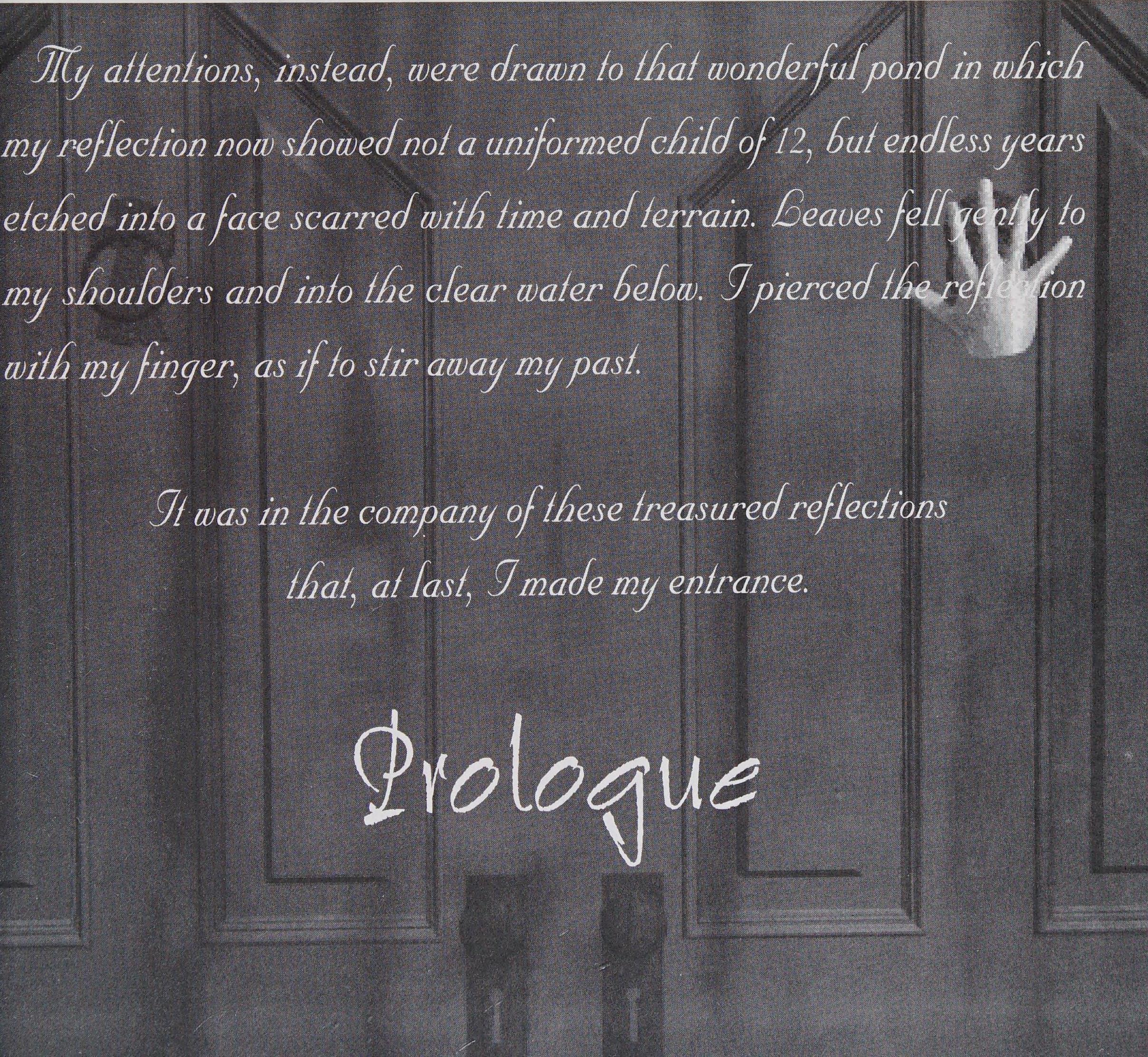
I've always fancied myself a man of the world. A man of hope, of life, of dream. The kind of man with no fate of his own, save for that which the every day passage of life would provide. I am, both in heart and soul, a journeyer.

During my lifelong travels, I've come to learn a great deal about the plight of human morality and mortality. There does exist, a hideous nature in the deepest bowels of mans' hopes and dreams—a fear so vile as to make the blood boil within ones solitary frame. If there is a curse befallen humankind, it is that the wise man sees as much as he ought and not as much as he can.

So it came to pass that one pure fall day replete with harvest brilliance, I returned to a place of my youth, to my cousin Edwin's home.

It was the one place I was certain would seal my ultimate salvation.

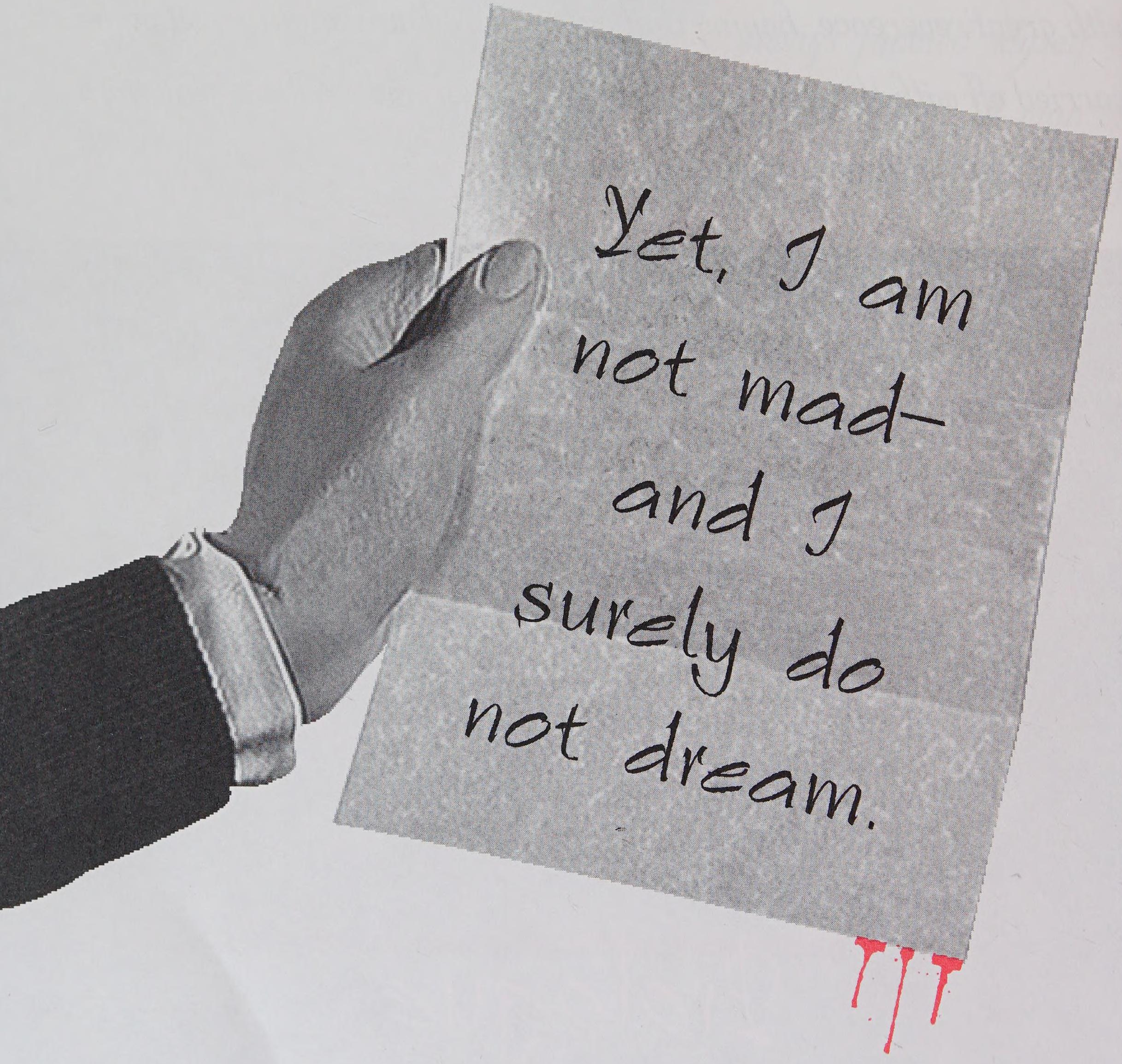
As I came upon the drive to the splendid manor, I looked upon it with great reverence, hoping that my mirrored past might somehow be carried off with the wild ocean breeze that carried itself over the high bluffs, kissing the icy, thrashing water below.



My attentions, instead, were drawn to that wonderful pond in which my reflection now showed not a uniformed child of 12, but endless years etched into a face scarred with time and terrain. Leaves fell gently to my shoulders and into the clear water below. I pierced the reflection with my finger, as if to stir away my past.

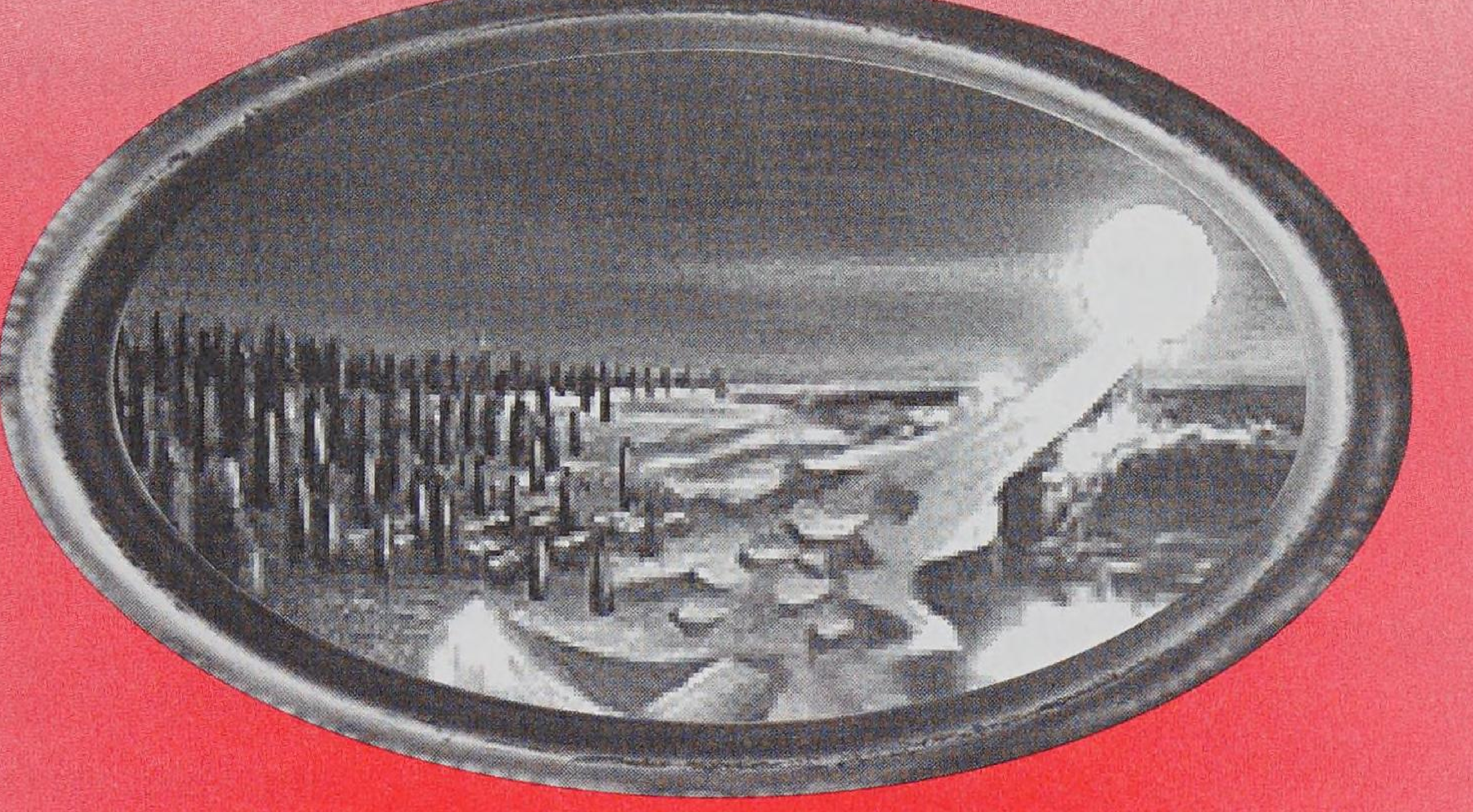
It was in the company of these treasured reflections
that, at last, I made my entrance.

Prologue



Yet, I am
not mad—
and I
surely do
not dream.

Chapter 1



Malevolence: Day One

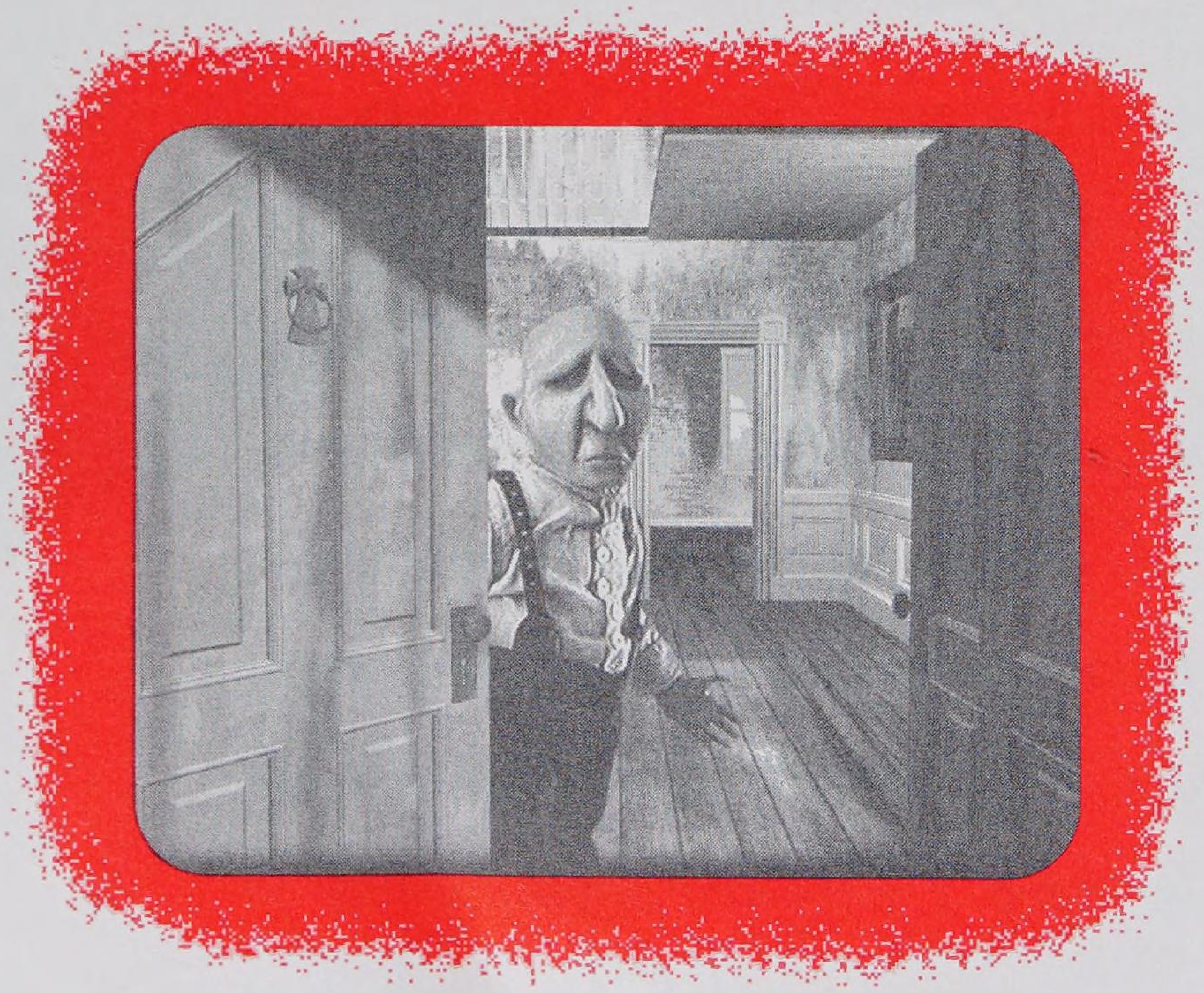
You know me, though we have never met. I am the Journeyer, my given name being of no import, my mark on this Earth indelible. Yes, surely you know me. For beyond the flesh-and-blood world of the chaotic and mundane, in the realm between consciousness and dreamstate, between life and death, our souls have met and danced, spiraling through time and space, over and over again.

During the many years I journeyed throughout the far corners of the world, never have I witnessed anything that so shattered the foundation of my soul as did the events that transpired the brusque autumn of 1872. Had I not recorded *them here in my personal journal, I myself would find them incredulous. As it were, I cannot say, in these entries, where the boundaries between the material world and the otherworld begin and end; nor, thank God, can I remember. The savage events depicted here, written in my own hand as I witnessed them, did, indeed, occur. Of that, and little else, I am certain.*

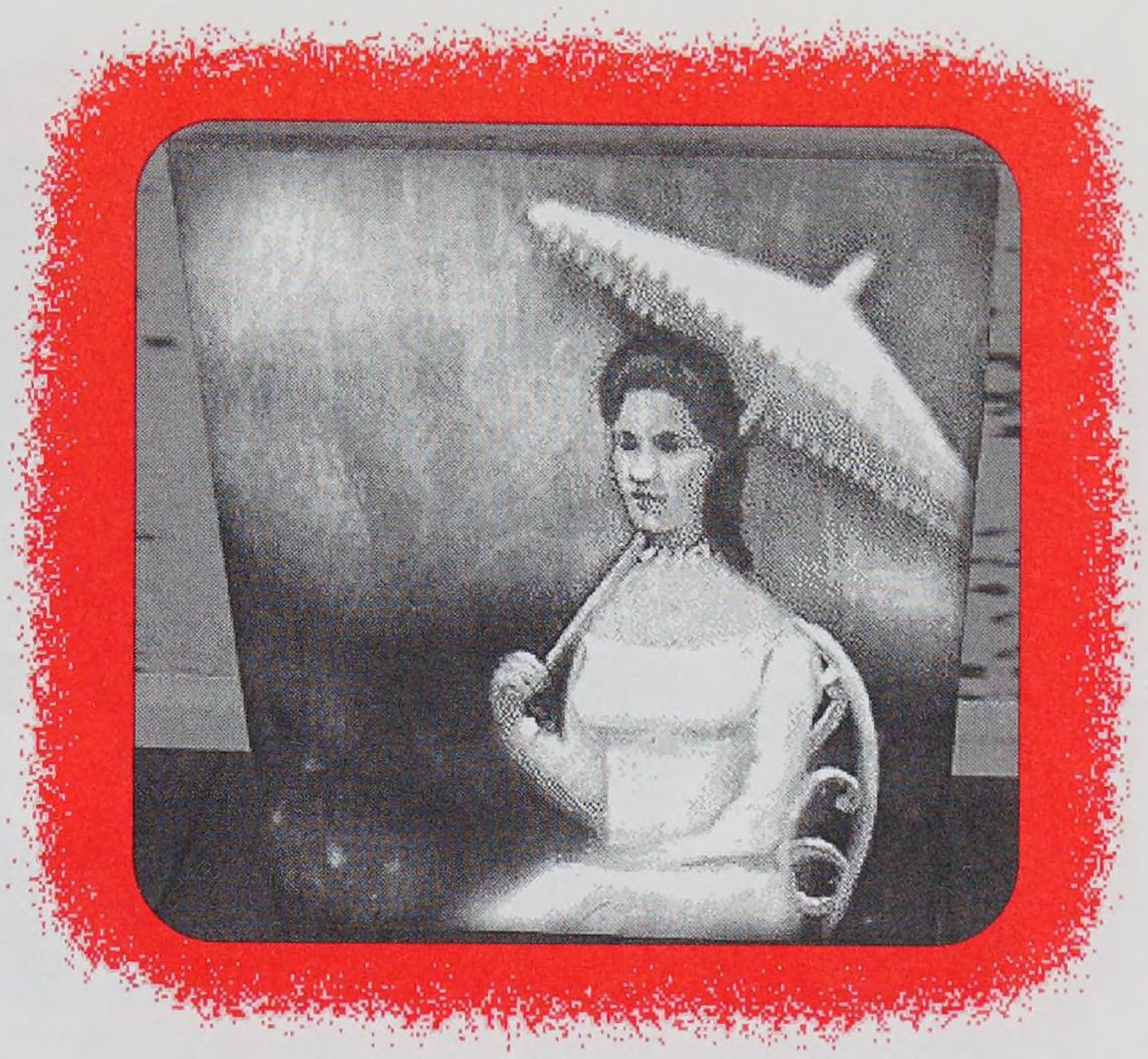
Now, I open my journal to that page wherein I recorded my arrival at the comely mansion of my cousin Edwin, weary with the moribund thoughts that are my eternal baggage, seeking refuge therein.

October 8, 1872

At long last, I am returned to the asylum of my youth, enveloped with the solace and companionship of my only living relations! Long have I been separated, by circumstance and necessity, from my kin. I so look forward to making the reacquaintence of my wandering brother Henry; my beguiling cousin, the fair Elise—my, how she's grown!—and of course, my most hospitable cousin Edwin.



I arrived at the door to cousin Edwin's capacious home early today, after a rather harrowing approach along the thunderous surf. Perhaps the difficulty of the journey, coupled with the burdens of my past, caused my spirit to pitch with sudden apprehension as I lifted the gavel and knocked upon the door.

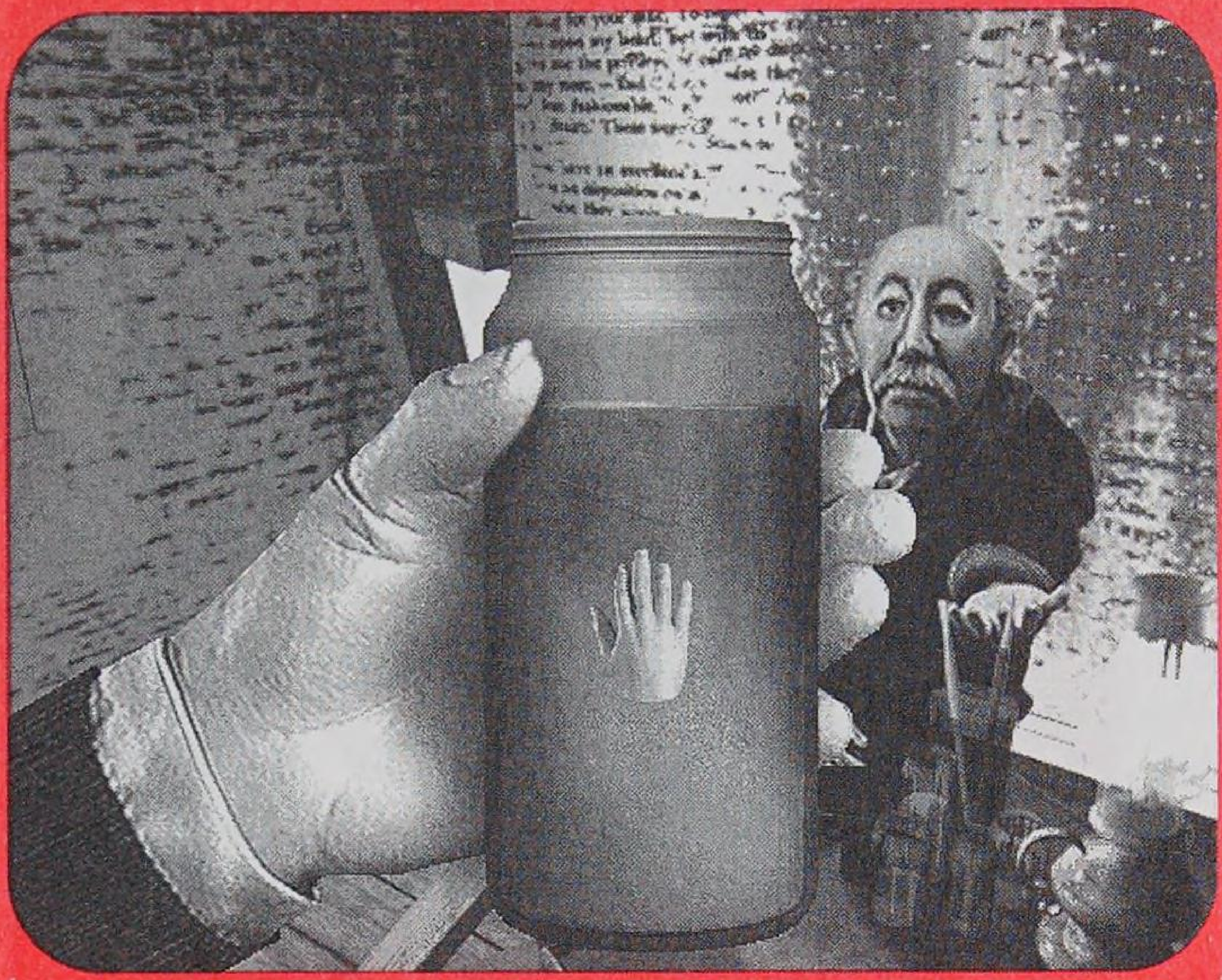


Edwin's good man, Ambers, showed me in. Cousin Edwin has often commented on the virtues of this loyal servant. Why, I do believe Ambers has been with Edwin for some years, since the birth of Elise in this very house. So rarely am I an invited guest in the homes of others, perhaps I was oversensitive to his seemingly offish manner, for I was expected and surely welcome.

I immediately went to Edwin's studio for our long awaited reunion. There, I found him at an easel, engrossed in his painting. I hesitated and waited for him to take notice of my entrance, not wanting to disturb his creative flow. I should not have feared. He welcomed me heartily, and I stepped closer to return the greeting and thank him for his invitation. Oh, it does feel unusually pleasant to be embraced into the womb of one's family.

I couldn't help but notice the freshly painted portrait leaning against the wall by the windows. I stepped closer to the portrait to examine it. Elise, I wondered? Can that beautiful young woman be our own little Elise? No? Then who might it be? A woman I myself would fancy to meet, lest she be a figment of Edwin's imagination. The portrait is surprisingly good; hardly a mere past-time, as Edwin claims. He must spend hours perfecting his art.

I approached the easel, intending to ask permission to view Edwin's current undertaking, but was stopped in my tracks by a surging pain in my forehead and a burning in my nostrils. Perplexed, I picked up a bottle of open paint thinner sitting on the table next to the easel. Could this be the cause of my discomfort? Uncle Edwin admonished me to "Be careful with that!" He related the gruesome anecdote of a painter

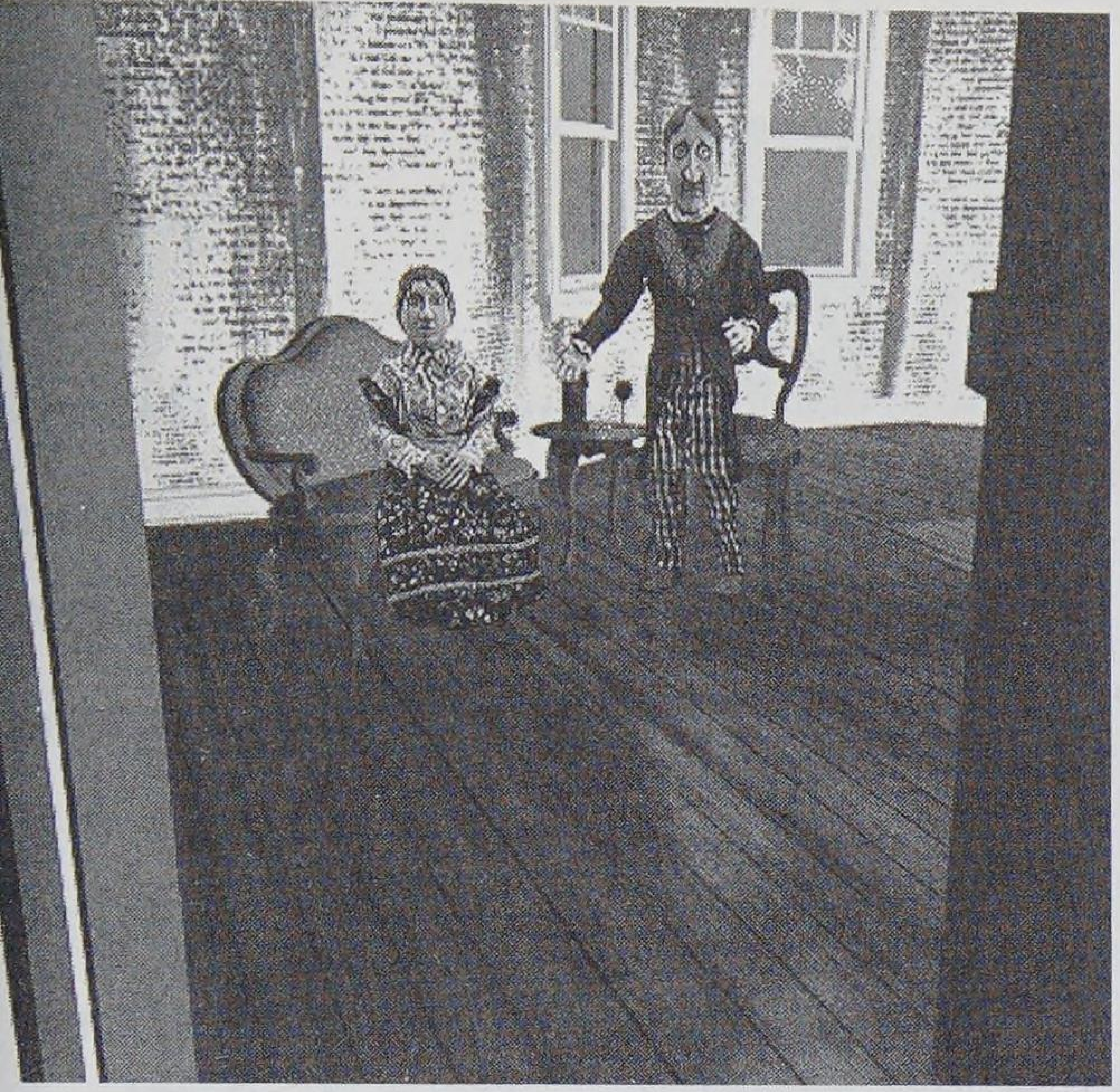


who went mad from its fumes, but reassured me that so long as the windows were open, no harm would come.

Curiously, when I looked toward the windows, I noticed they were fastened tight. I tried to open them, but the sashes were apparently glued or nailed shut. I turned back to Edwin, meaning to question him about proper ventilation, but he did not take notice, nor seem concerned. Instead, much to my pleasant surprise, he announced that my brother Henry, from whom I have been long estranged, was upstairs visiting with Elise even now!

I hastened from Edwin's Studio, eager to greet both Elise and Henry. Once again, however, pain sliced through my brain, and I determined to find a seltzer to relieve my discomfiture. I went in search of Ambers. Surely he could direct me to a remedy. Drawn by the sound of grating metal emanating from below, I went to the Cellar. I approached Ambers, but before I could inquire about the seltzer, he reproached me to stay out of the Cellar. I was stunned!

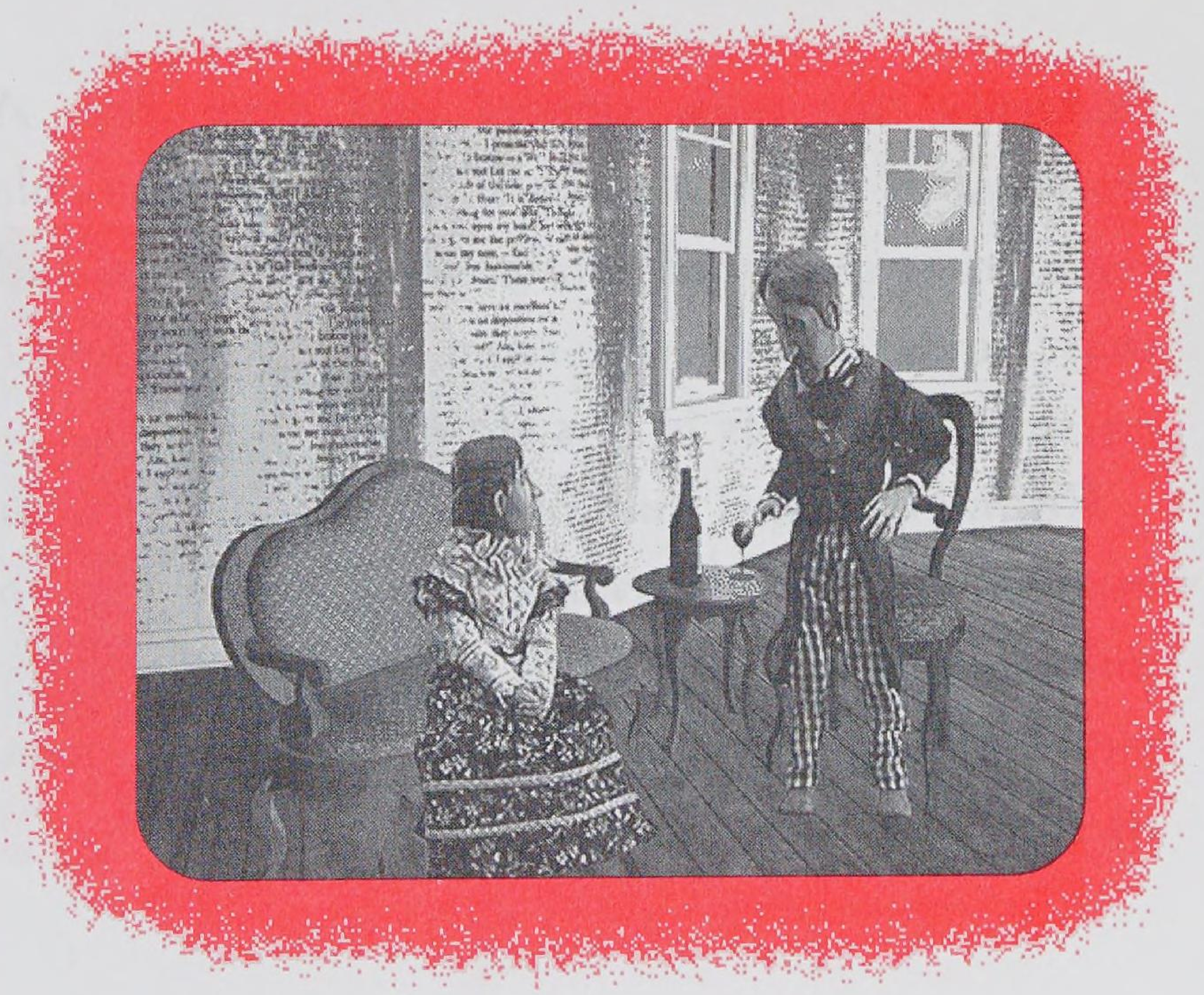
Well, never one to pass by a mystery, I am ashamed to say that my curiosity got the better of me. I turned away and made idle conversation for a moment or two. Then, when the sound of grating stopped and I knew Ambers had taken leave, I entered the passageway and made my way to the vault. Holding my breath, not knowing quite what to expect, I thrust open the door. A chill ran down my spine as I peered into the dark recess. All the while, the throbbing pain worsened in the cold and dampness of the Cellar. How ridiculous, I thought! Sneaking about and alarming myself for naught.

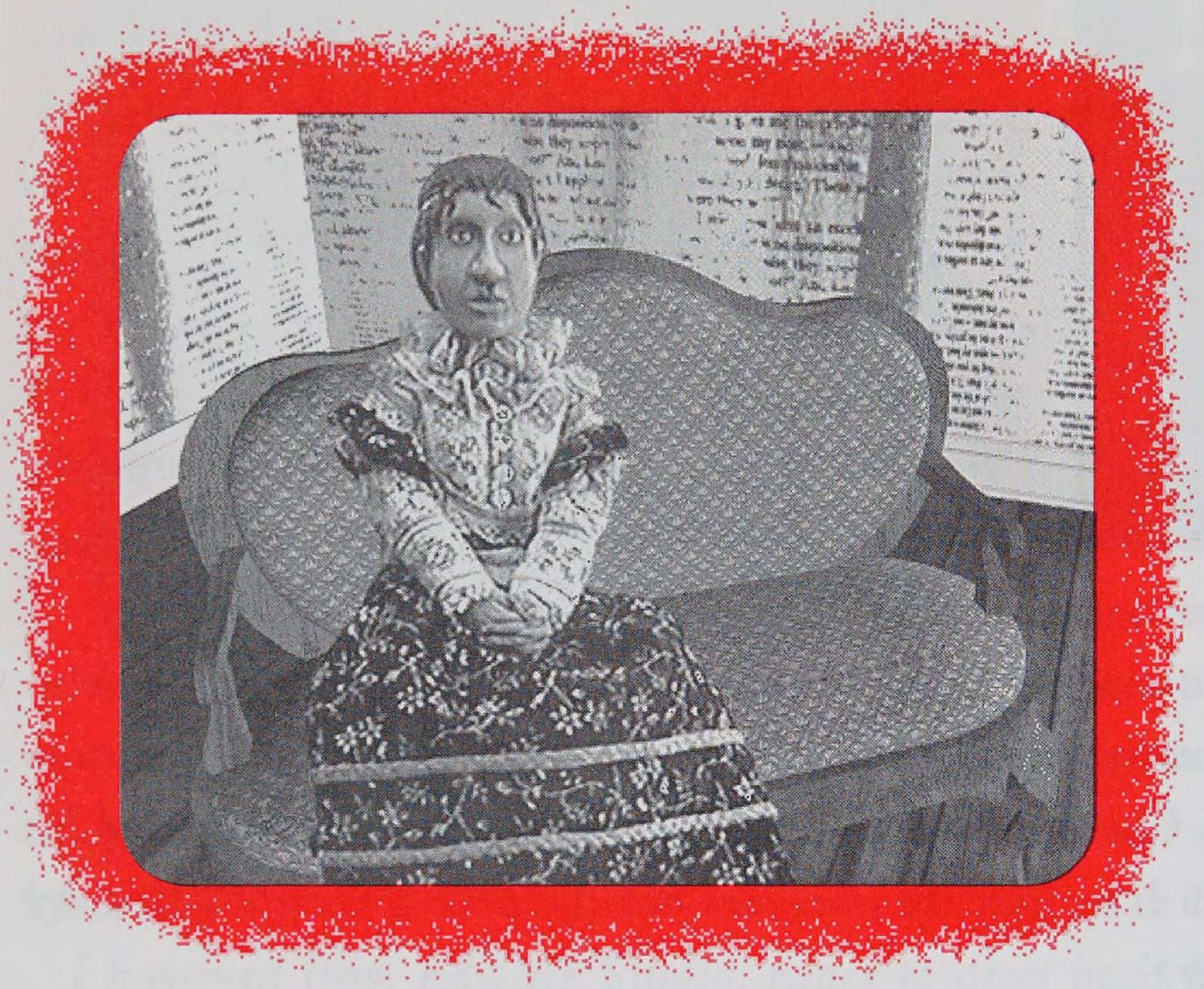


So, I made my way upstairs to visit with Elise and Henry. As I approached the Conservatory, the joyful sound of lively conversation greeted me. I joined them, expressing my profound joy at finding them both looking so invigoratingly well. I must say, though, it was with some degree of skepticism that I received the news of Henry's "travels." A roundabout, yes, but a worldly traveler? Not the Henry I know, or knew. Then, much time has passed since we last spoke.

I approached Henry, encouraging him to tell me all about his adventures. Apparently, dear Henry had more pressing intentions, given his abrupt proclamation that he was to "settle down." One would have to be a blind idiot not to notice his longing gaze at Elise. My, can it be that the innocent beauty Elise has captivated my philandering younger brother? The situation so delighted me, I could not help but offer a song of congratulations!

I moved to the piano—a beautiful baby grand with ivory keys and a polished mahogany body—and took my seat. I played a short concerto for the enchanted couple, who applauded with delight at my impromptu performance.





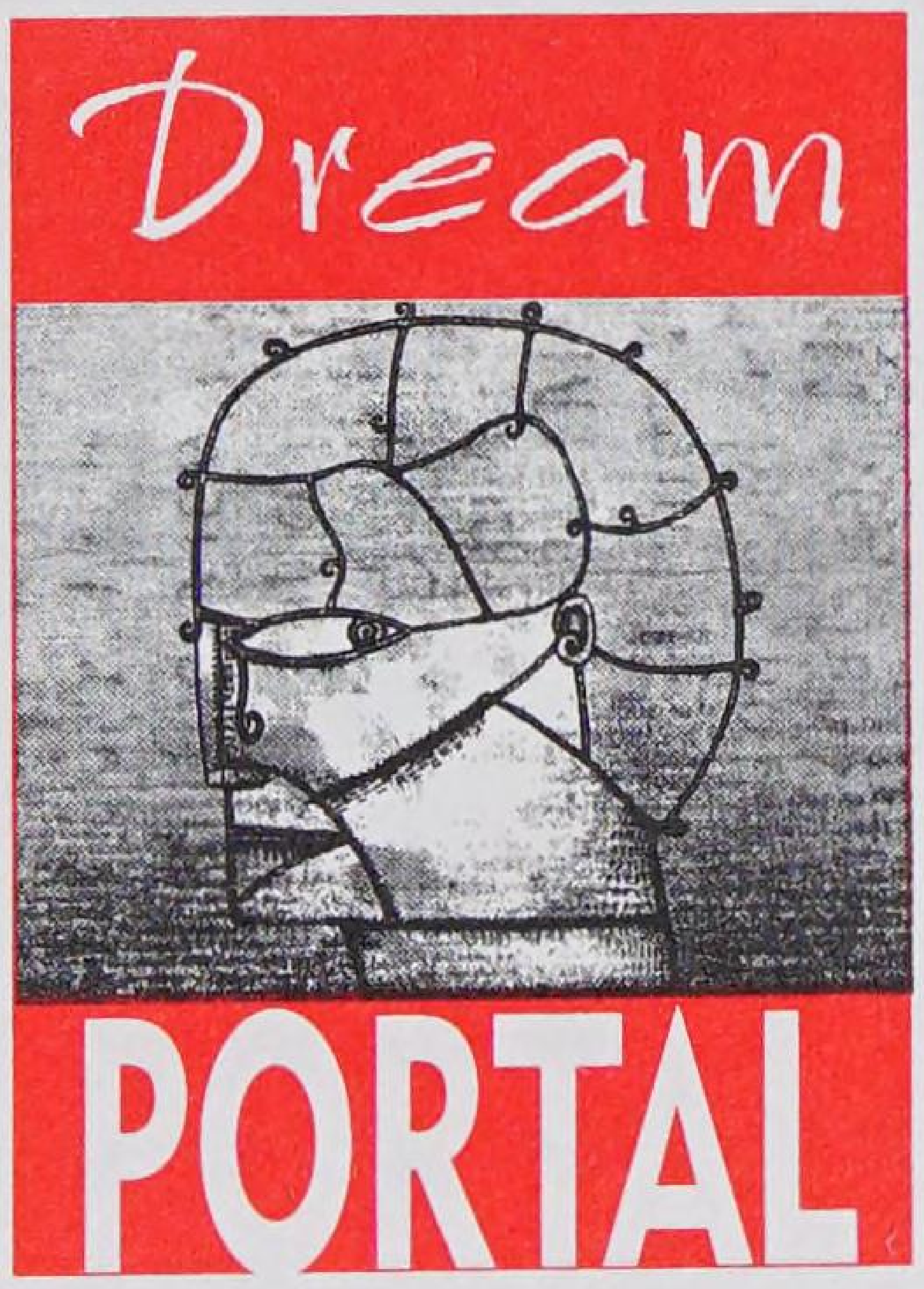
As I rose from the piano bench, the pain once again seared through my temples. Unsteadily, I approached the settee. The sound of my own blood gushing through my veins overwhelmed me so, I barely heard Elise's plaintive inquiry into Edwin's preoccupation with his painting.

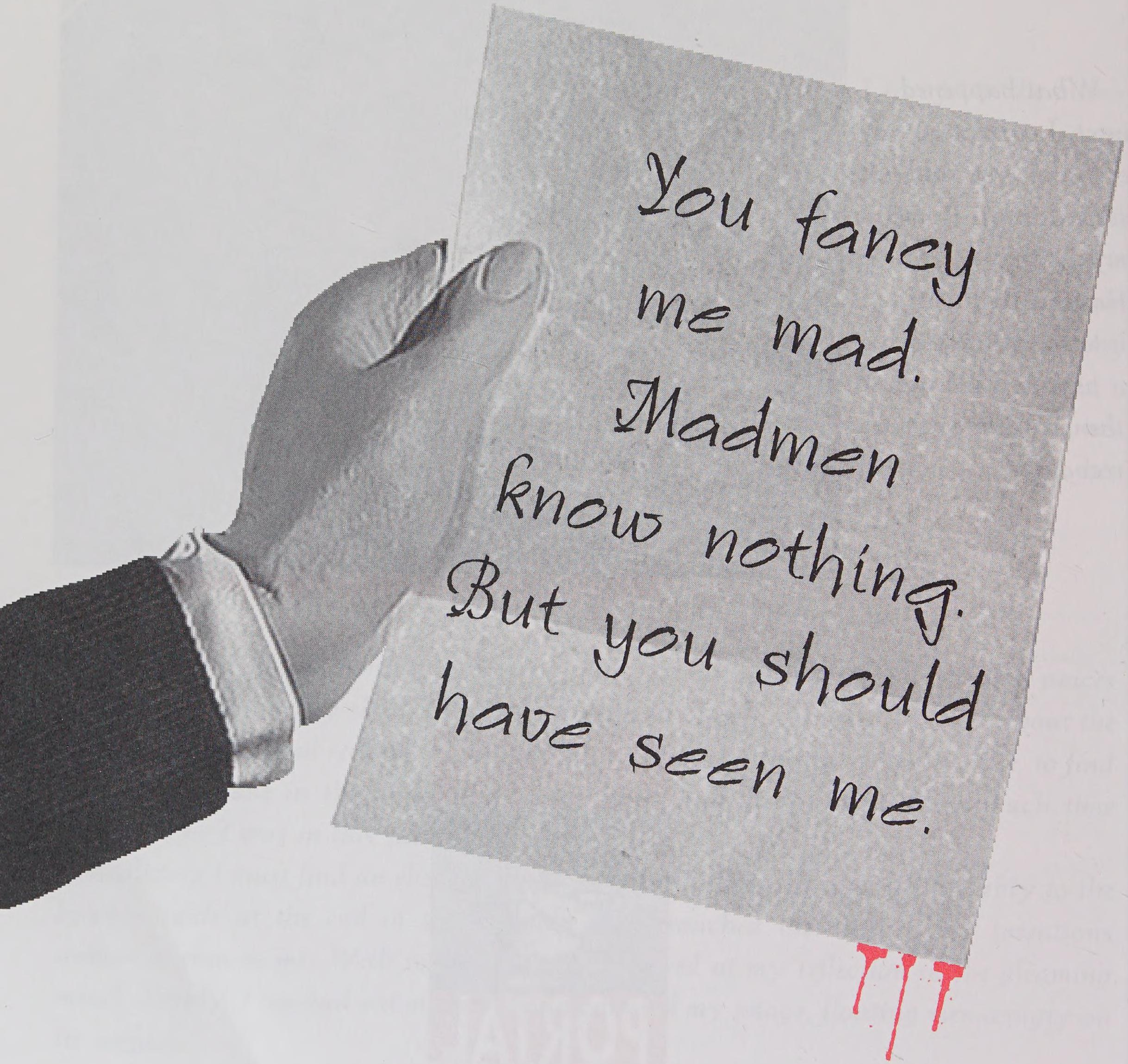
. . .

Suddenly, the room swirled and grew dim. A cacophony of whispering voices reverberated within my skull. My body grew cold, damp, clammy. I looked about the room, nauseous, head reeling, willing the pain and the pulsating voices to cease, to find that I was alone in the room. Elise and Henry had disappeared. How much time passed while I was in this state, I do not know.

Realizing I must find an elixir, I stumbled to the kitchen, drawn inexplicably to the butcher table at the end of the corridor. I approached the cleaver, my intentions unknown even to me. With swimming eyes, I peered at my reflection in the gleaming metal. Slowly, I reached out my hand and caressed my image, floating menacingly on its surface.

What happened next, I cannot explain. My soul seemed to lift from my body, transporting me into a time, a place, a psyche I did not then, nor do now, recognize.





You fancy
me mad.
Madmen
know nothing.
But you should
have seen me.

Chapter 2

The Tell-Tale Heart:

The Boarder (a.k.a. Norman)

New York City, 1845

There is a madness beyond comprehension that is best left untold. I thought quite simply that I'd gone mad. My heightened senses and unbearably horrific thoughts—had anyone been aware of them—were most certainly the musings of a madman. These feelings, however, were cleverly concealed by the calm facade I enacted during the everyday passing of my mundane existence. But I was wrong—very, very wrong. Evil does exist, of this I have never been more certain than at this moment. It has become painfully clear to me that no one chooses their own destiny. It is the soul that propels us along the path of our lives.

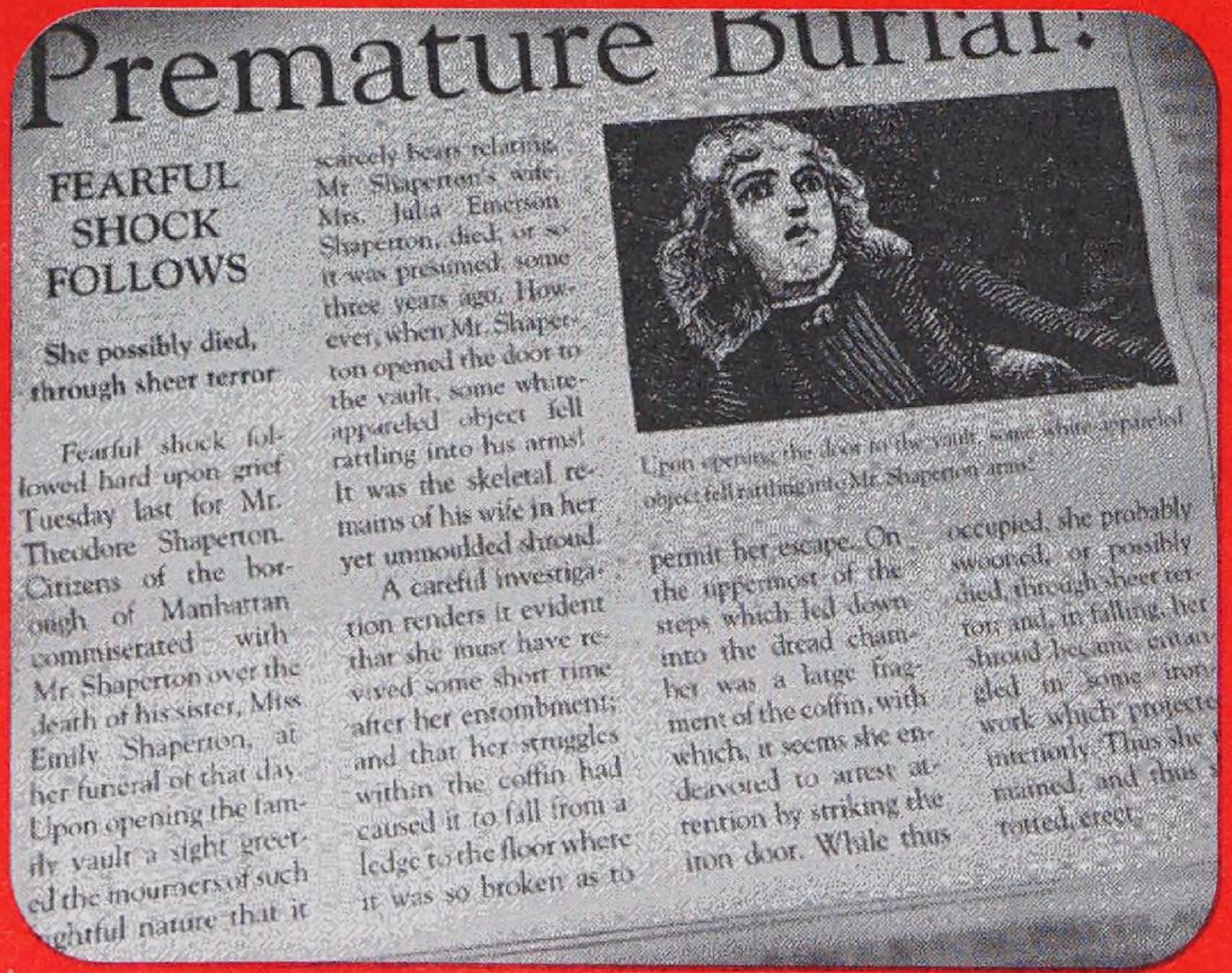
So it came to pass that I engaged a room in a house belonging to the old man. I know not how nor why I happened to make his acquaintance, only that he invoked in me a feeling of serenity, his unpretentious charm providing quiet companionship. It was, however, that same quiet that caused me to fixate on a physical affliction so hideous as to make my blood run cold.

It was his eye. That despicable eye.

Blue and filmy, it tore through to the very core of my being, casting upon me the light of pure evil. As the days passed I grew increasingly obsessed with that vulturous eye. I took to taking endless walks through dank city streets to occupy my time, avoiding my dreaded return to that distressing abode. Then one day I came to realize that I had no choice but to somehow extricate the evil that so vexed me. Only then could I restore the sanctity of my life . . . and his.

The hour has grown late, and the house is warm and inviting this eve, as always. But I am nervous, so very nervous, and find little solace despite the comfort of familiarity.

I force myself to sit quietly at the table for a spell to alleviate the dizziness exploding in my brain. I peruse the evening newspaper in hopes it will ease my aching mind. Hmm. Died of sheer terror, did she? Quite an appropriate method of demise in my opinion.



Premature Burial!

FEARFUL SHOCK FOLLOWS

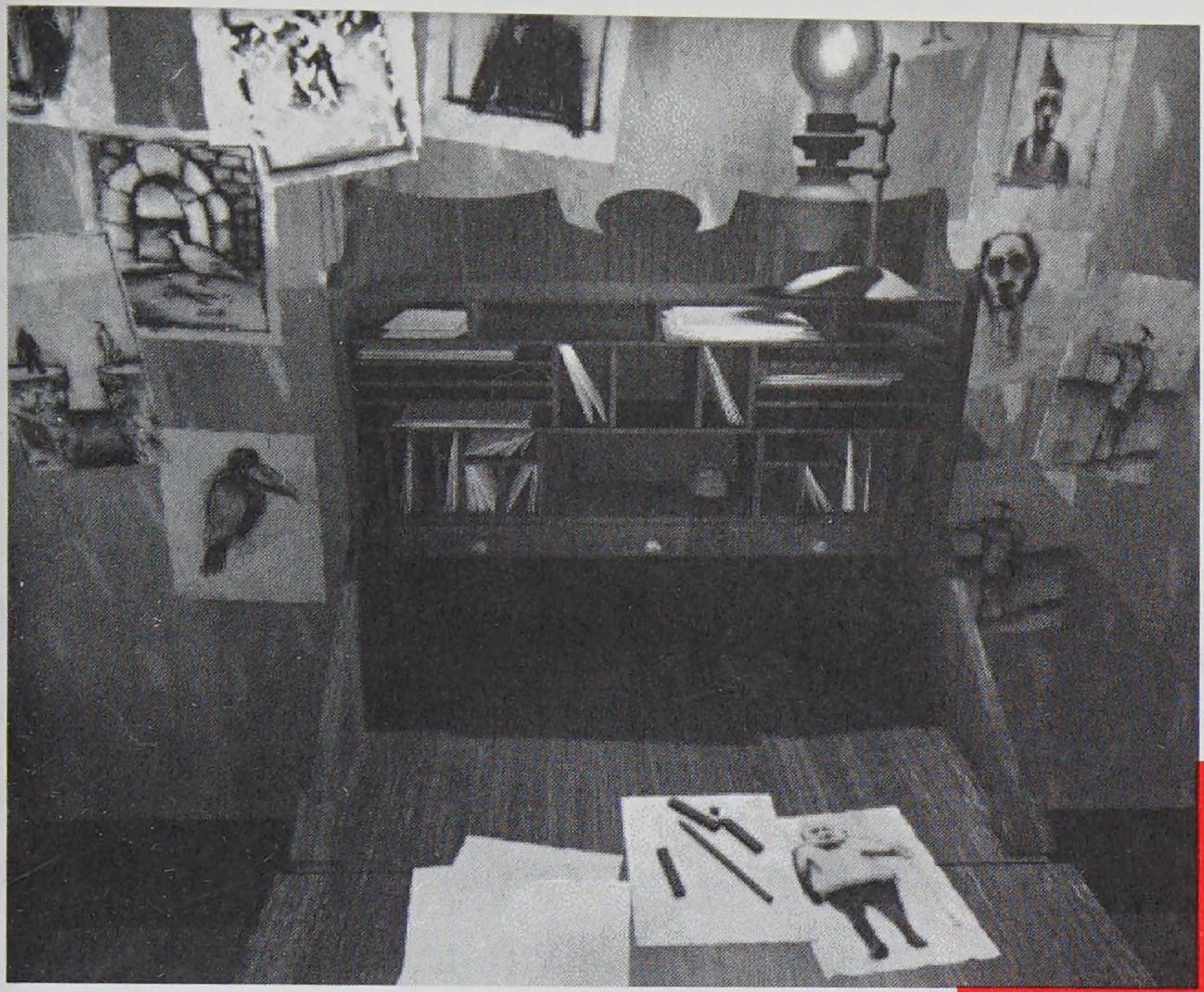
She possibly died, through sheer terror

Fearful shock followed hard upon grief Tuesday last for Mr. Theodore Shaperton. Citizens of the borough of Manhattan commiserated with Mr. Shaperton over the death of his sister, Miss Emily Shaperton, at her funeral of that day. Upon opening the family vault a sight greeted the mourners of such ghtful nature that it scarcely bears relating. Mr. Shaperton's wife, Mrs. Julia Emerson Shaperton, died, or so it was presumed, some three years ago. However, when Mr. Shaperton opened the door to the vault, some white-appareled object fell rattling into his arms! It was the skeletal remains of his wife in her yet unmoulded shroud.

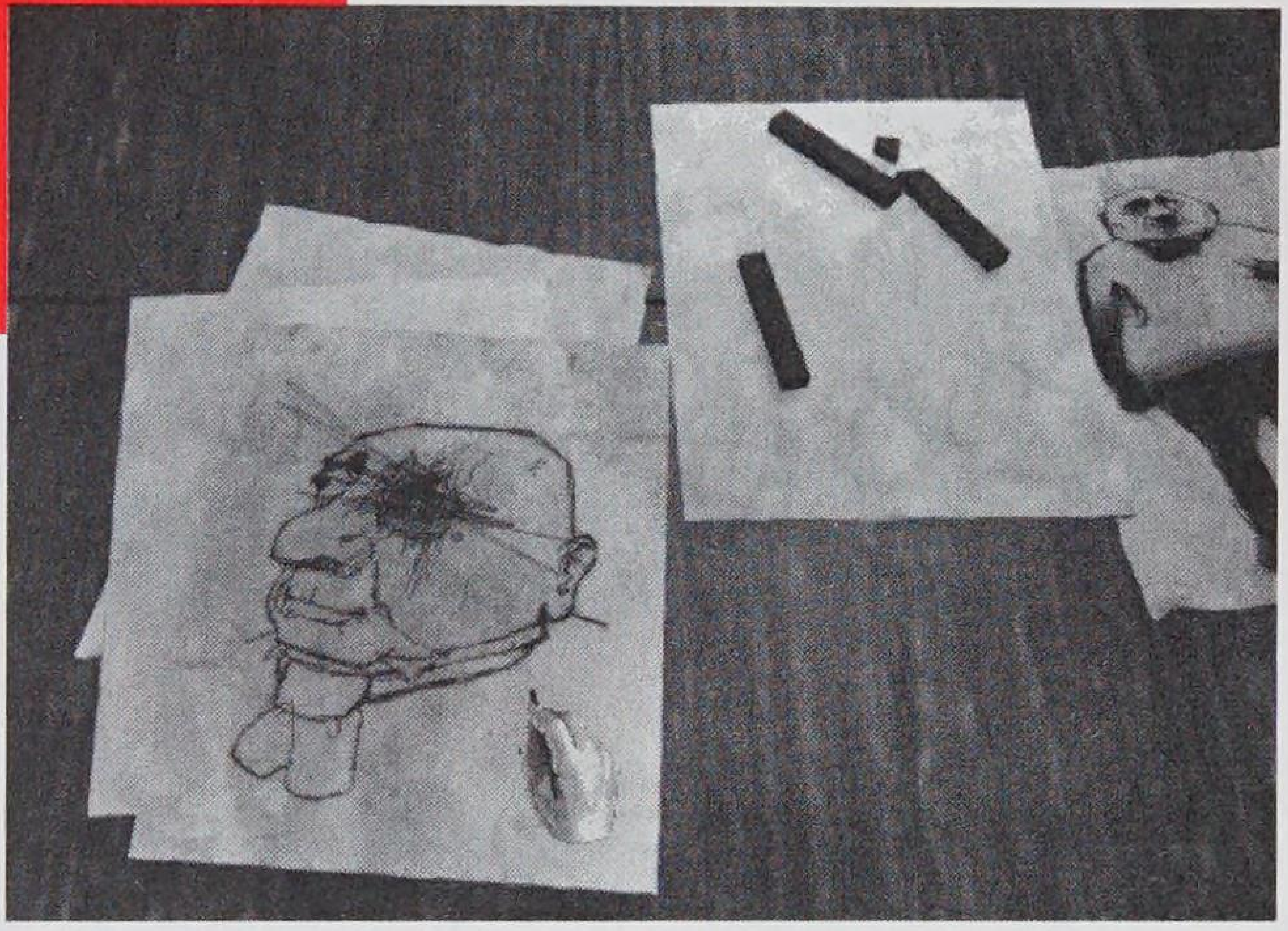
A careful investigation renders it evident that she must have revived some short time after her entombment; and that her struggles within the coffin had caused it to fall from a ledge to the floor where it was so broken as to permit her escape. On the uppermost of the steps which led down into the dread chamber was a large fragment of the coffin, with which, it seems she endeavored to arrest attention by striking the iron door. While thus occupied, she probably swooned, or possibly died through sheer terror; and, in falling, her shroud became entangled in some iron-work which projecte interiorly. Thus she mained, and thus rotted, erect.

Upon opening the door to the vault, some white-appareled object fell rattling into Mr. Shaperton arms!

Where is he tonight, the object of my affliction? He never retires at this hour. I myself have grown weary from my tortured walks but am far too restless to succumb to sleep. Still, I retire to my room, seeking some way to distract my restless mind.



Ah, my drawings. They most certainly provide comfort, albeit small. Nonetheless, they are all that remain of the prestigious and fruitful life I once possessed. Yes, I shall sit here at this desk, and with this pencil, I sketch. . . create . . . and ruin. My, what an artiste I've become! Master creator of the very portrait of evil.



Unbeknownst to the old man, I have confiscated his spectacles. Now where did I put them? Ah yes, here in the desk drawer. My rationale for keeping them eludes me; they are useless, at best. I suppose they serve as a reminder . . . to keep me strong, focused, resolute. As I wipe the cracked lens, I am reminded of my purpose–a mission most compelling.

Where can he be, my magnificent foe? I expected to see his hideous face upon my arrival earlier. Surely he would not retire to his chambers without first seeking my company. He is far too predictable, this old man, ever concerning himself with my welfare as he does. Perhaps it is best I return to the kitchen. There, he will, no doubt, offer up some of the soup he keeps terminally boiling on the stove.

Yes, he is here, seated at his crude table before his wretched soup. His actions are as regular as clockwork. I resolve myself to sit with him once more . . . but not for much longer. That distasteful swill–I cannot bear to even witness as he delves into that filthy bowl once more. And his slurping . . . that repulsive drivel is matched only by the disgusting nature of his eye.

That evil eye. It is the eye I find most unbearable. Even now, chills race down my spine with the speed of an electric current gone astray. I must break his gaze. How? With utmost trepidation, I pat his brow. Yes, that does it. Break the stare–dispel the interminable gaze!

Good God, no! I cannot eat, not now. The incognizance of the old man astounds me. So generous, so kind. It is true, I love him as a son loves his father. Yet he cannot fathom how much I despise him. This repulsive creature causes me physical illness and excruciating mental turmoil. I am overcome with the urge to flee, to find a space in which to breathe. This table appears to me as a shrine to his death.

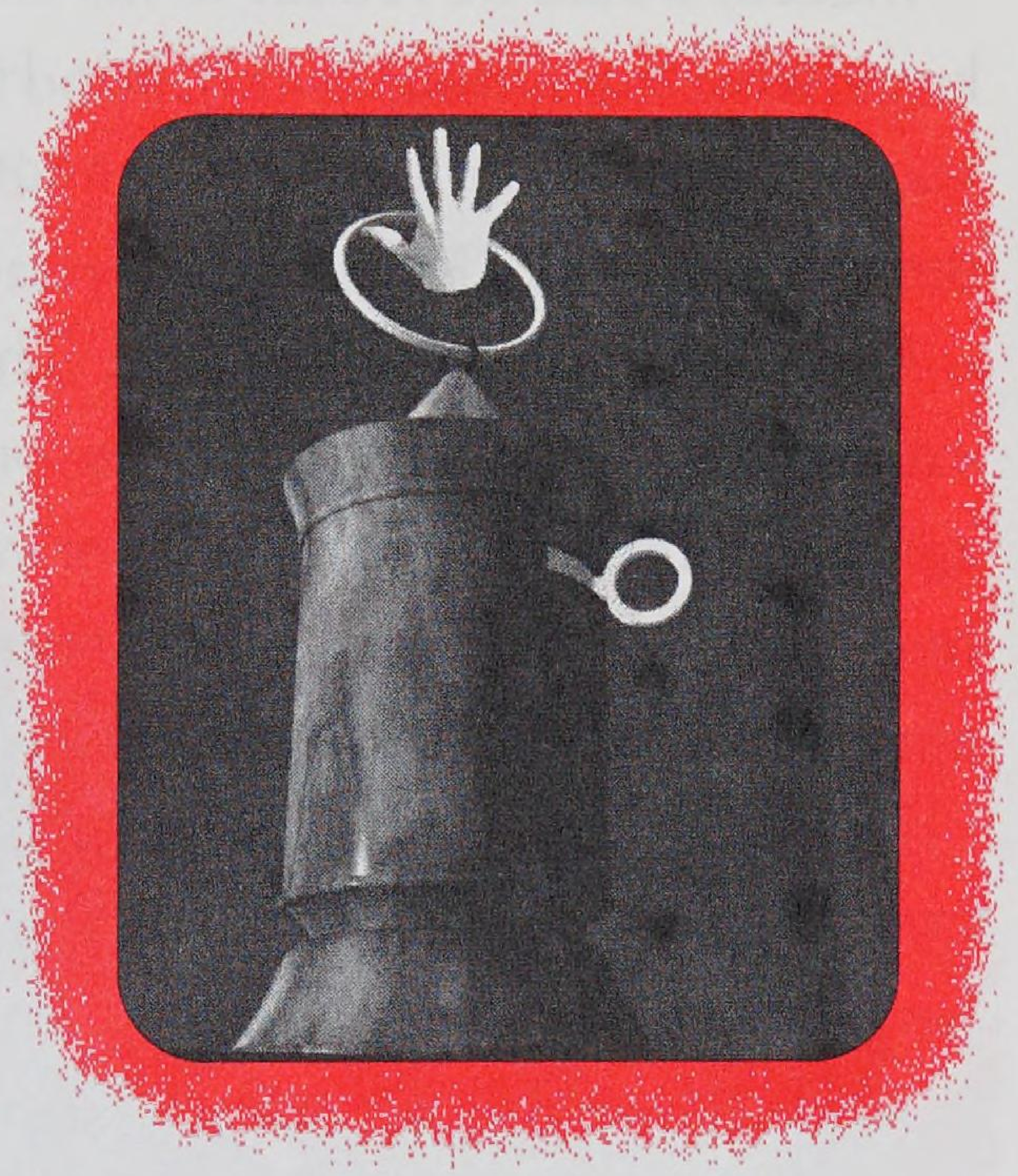
I lurch to the window and wait for the passage of time to restore my calm. There I wait, setting my eyes upon the outside world ere it be shrouded in darkness.

Yes, old man, it does grow late. So predictable, the old fool–so cunning am I. We bid one another good night, and still he remains oblivious to my intentions. How perfect the mind of a madman. So very, very perfect.

With darkness fallen, the time has come. I walk quietly down the hall and check the lantern. I close the shutter. Everything in its place. Strange is this obsession of mine. If I am truly mad, as they say, then the wisdom of madness is foresight. It is the consistency of my plan that ensures its success. Did he hear my footsteps? No, surely not. The lantern is secure, my scheme intact.

I return to the main room, where I shall bide my time . . . until destiny calls. Quietly. He hears many things, this old fool . . . especially at night.

This room, this house, torment me this eve. So frayed are my nerves, I feel as if I could crawl from my skin. Time moves slowly, ever so slowly. Perhaps if I see time pass . . . I move closer to the clock . . . study the seconds ticking by. Oh fates! If only I could take matters–that is, time–into my own hands. I run my shaking hand over the smooth face of the clock. Oh were I time's master!



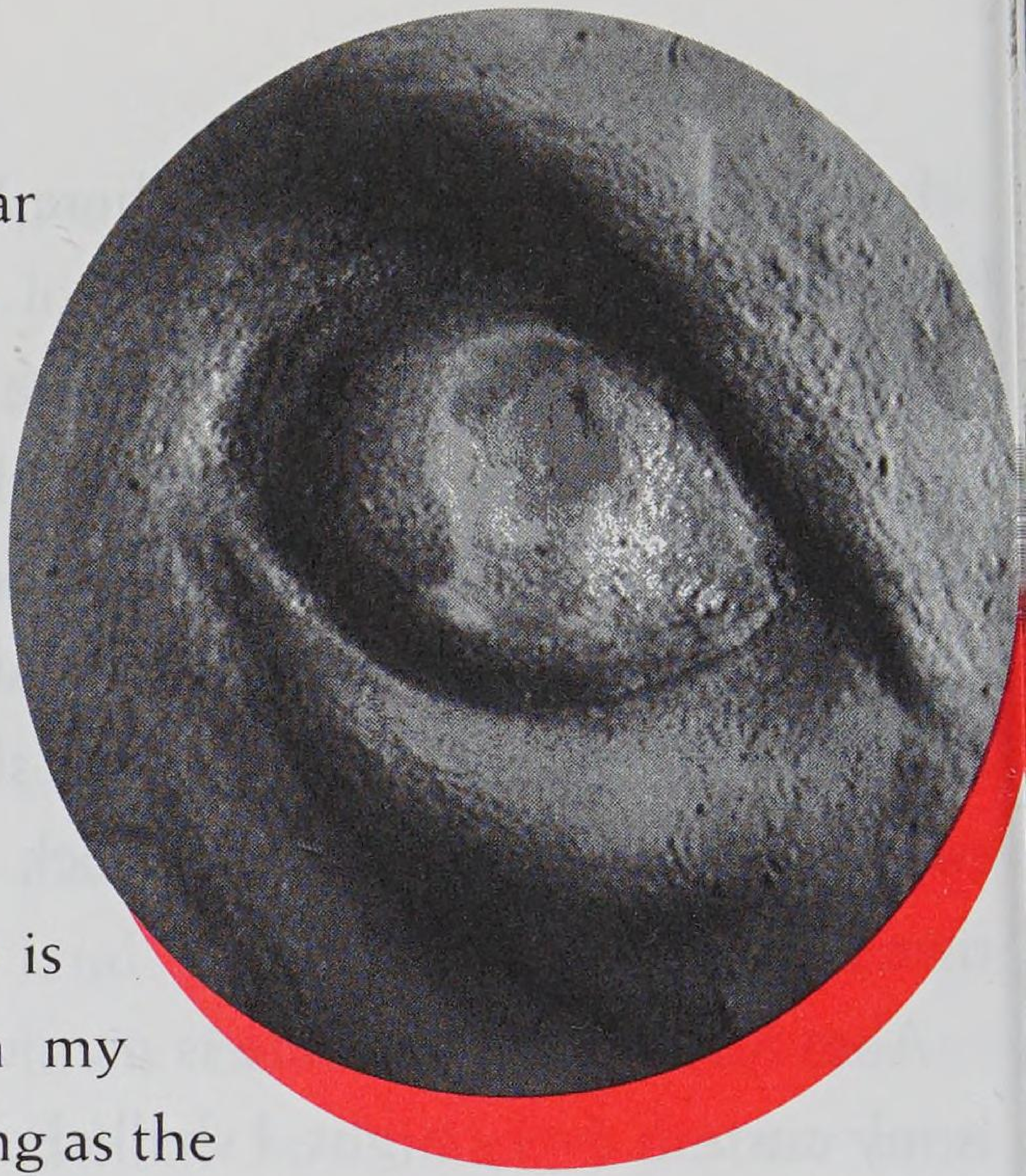
Aha! Midnight. The time is now upon me. As is my custom every night, I shall check in on the old man as he slumbers alone, unsuspecting, in his room. Surely he is sound asleep by now. Down the hall I creep, as quiet as a church mouse. On the way to his room,, I grab the lantern. Now the door. Slowly, oh so slowly, I open it and step smoothly inside, the lantern secure in my hand. Though the room is pitch black, I see him still– so embedded in my thoughts is his image.

I open the shutter of the lantern ever so slightly. I must look upon that horrific eye. Gasp! It is open! There he rests so innocently, the wretched fool. If only he knew of my midnight endeavors, would he sleep so well?

Undiscovered, of course, I retreat. Another night passes. Sweet dreams, my repugnant benefactor.

With the door securely shut, I can but revel in the deed to be done. Patience is truly a virtue–one that only the mad can endure. I return to the main room to await night's end. And wait. From my vigil at the window, I wait patiently as day dissolves to night.

. . .



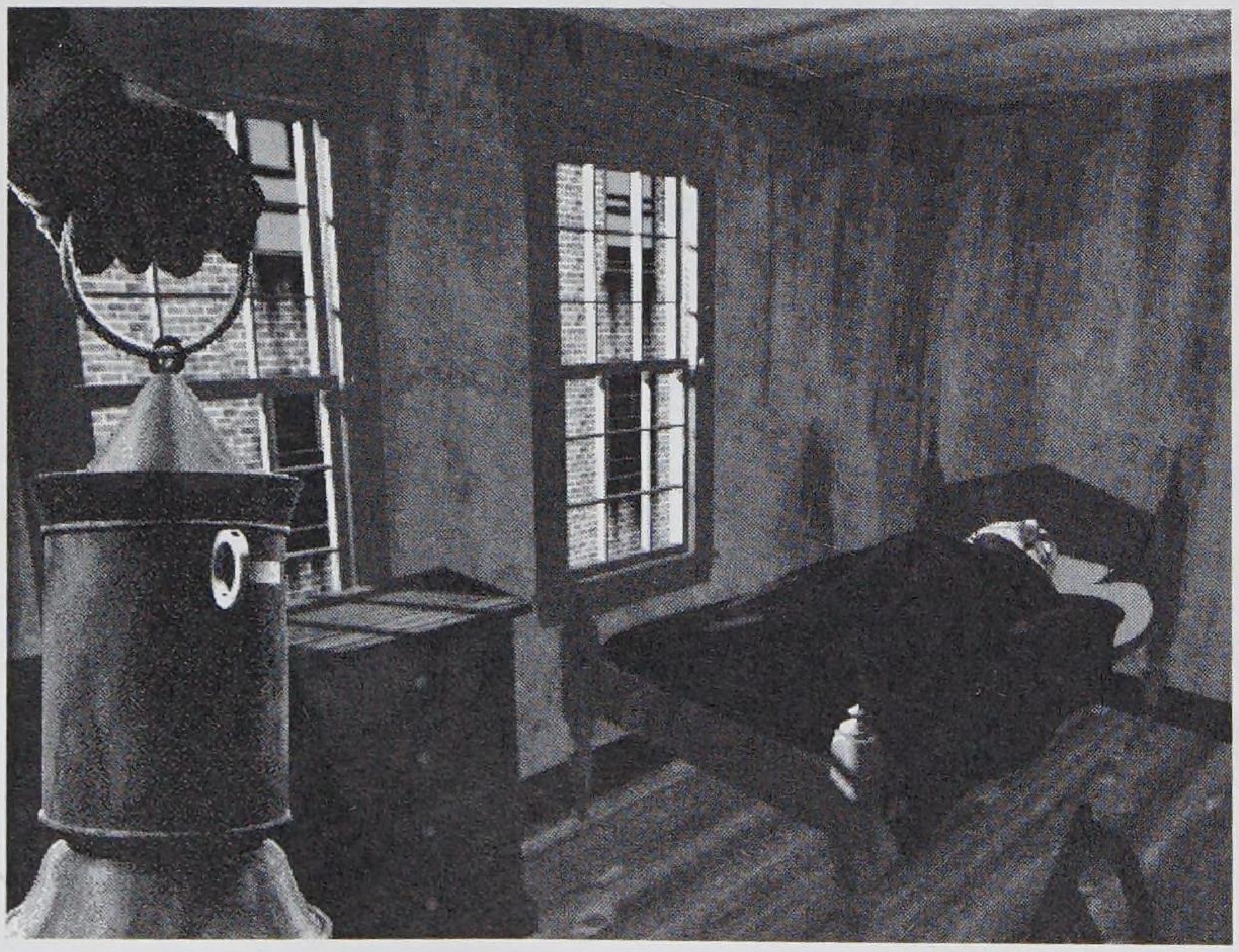
Finally, darkness cloaks the house once more. I hear him, feel him. He nears . . . Yes, he is here. Like clockwork. Sitting before the table and the paltry feast he so worships.

Indeed, would he retreat to his chambers if he knew what lies ahead? Surely not. He wishes me good night. I am afraid I cannot return that promise.

I am at my wits end tonight. The nervousness is excruciating. My pacing serves only to worsen my agitation. Time marches slowly forward, accelerating as the hour of my retribution draws near. Ah . . . now, at last, the anticipated moment is upon me. I feel it.

I make my nightly trek down the hall, through the corridor of Hell. This night, however, shall be different from the rest. I remove the lantern from the mantle . . . How better to illuminate the object of my obsession?

Again, I open his door slowly, stealthily, as I have those countless nights before. There he rests in the black of night . . . and he doesn't even suspect my clever scheme.



He stirs. Is he awakening?

Silence.

Fear. Fear destroys the mind. I am an obstacle to my mind, my own fear.

I open the shutter. Dispel my fear. Dear God, it slipped. Did he hear the sound? He groans.

I cannot see him, but I know he sits up in his bed. He is terrified . . . utterly *terrified*! I can see that putrid eye . . .

It taunts me even in darkness.

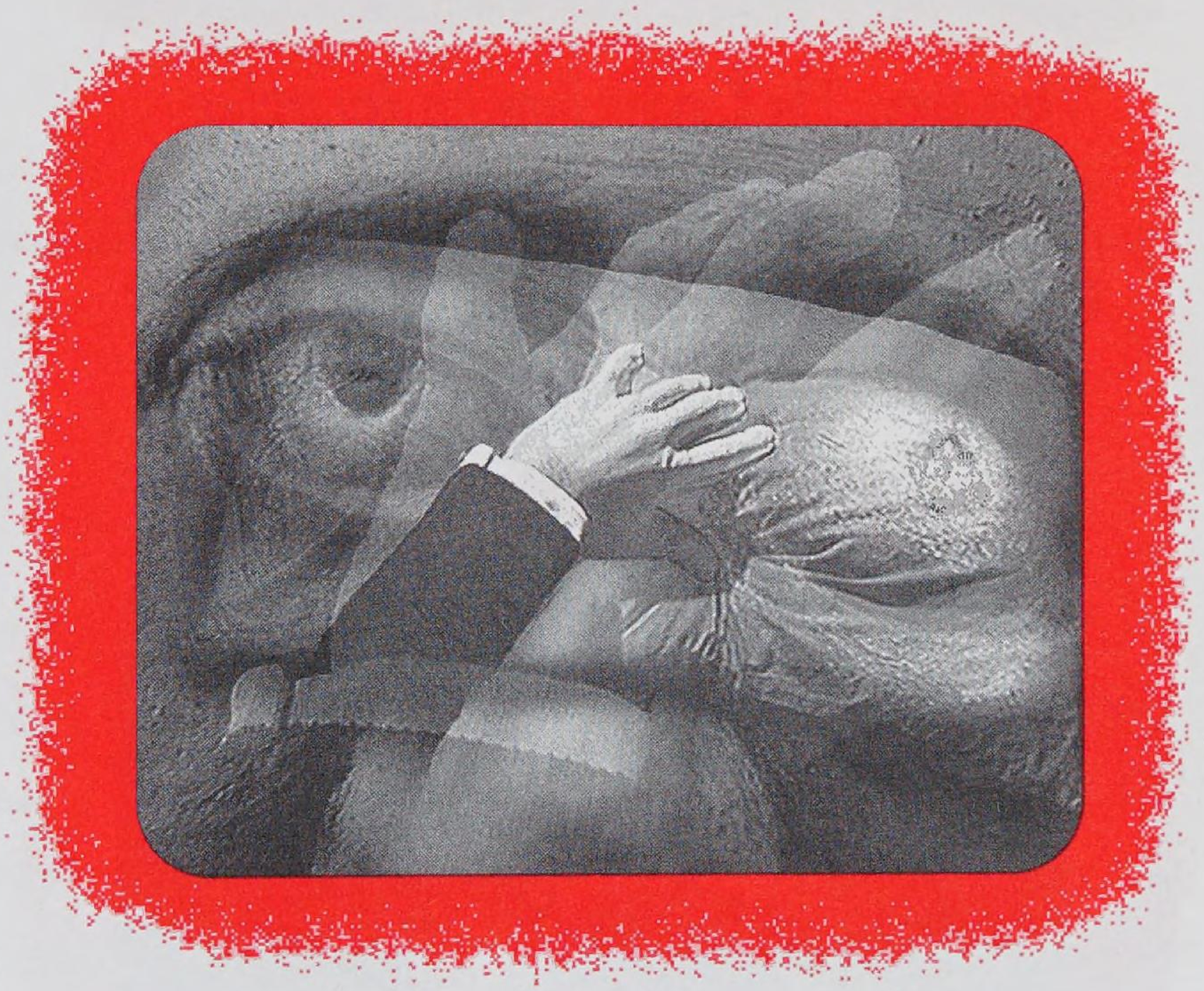
I move closer.

Oh, that sick, incessant groan. That mortal groan I know so well, lodged deep in the bowels of evil.

I move closer still.

How fortuitous–he remains completely terrified. Foolish, oh so foolish is this old man. He has no idea it is me so menacingly close at hand.

I can wait no longer. I must put him out of his misery–and mine. Blind him . . . I must ensure that his insipid eye closes for the last time . . . that the last thing he sees . . . is me.



I open the lantern's latch. But wait . . . that sound.

My God! His beating heart reverberates in my ear . . .

It grows louder, louder still.

How can he survive the lethal palpitations of his frenzied heart?

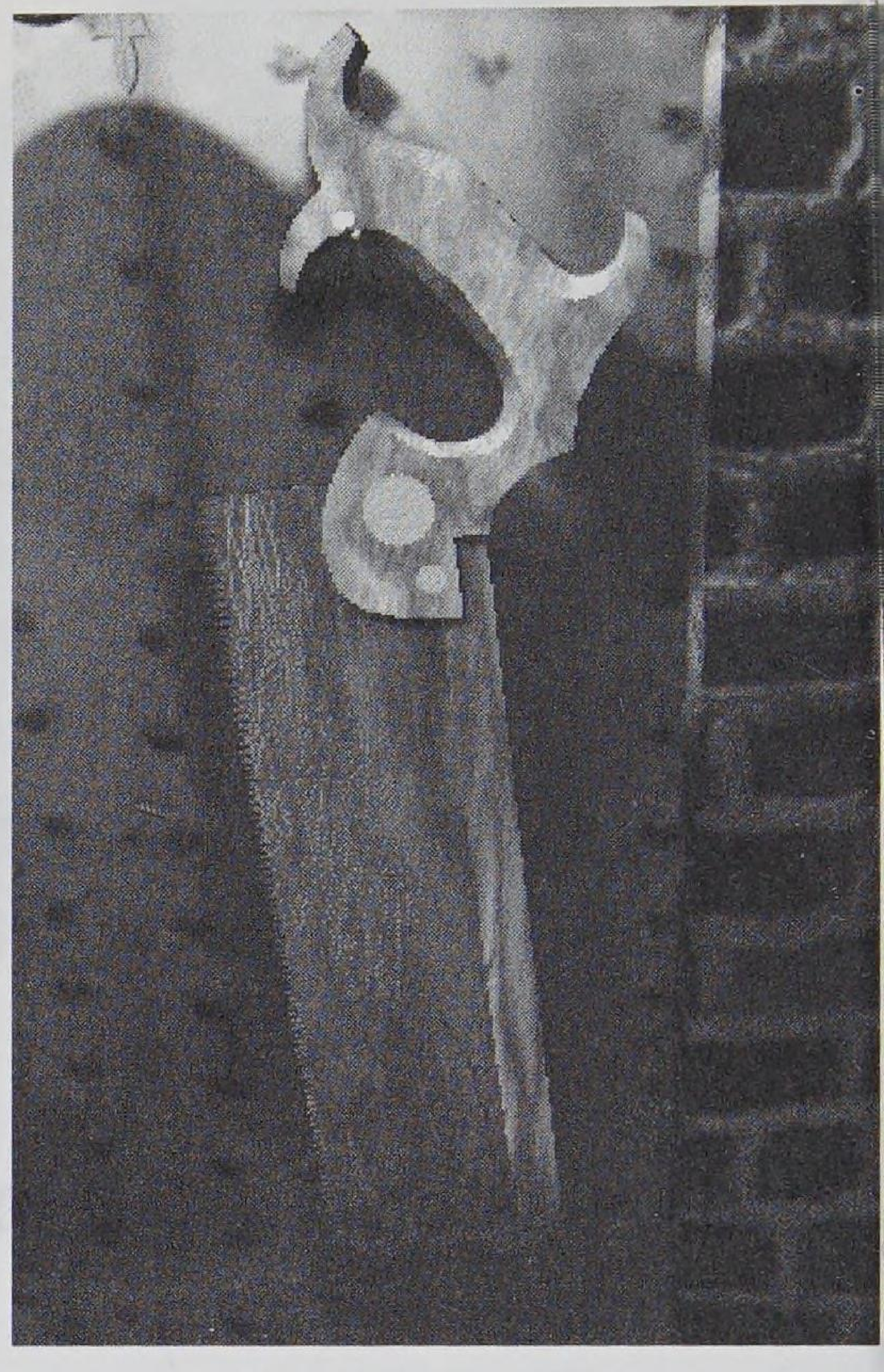
What if someone should hear?

With his own pillow, I cover his insidious eye and quiet the sound of his hideous heart. . .

• • •

What shall I do with the body?

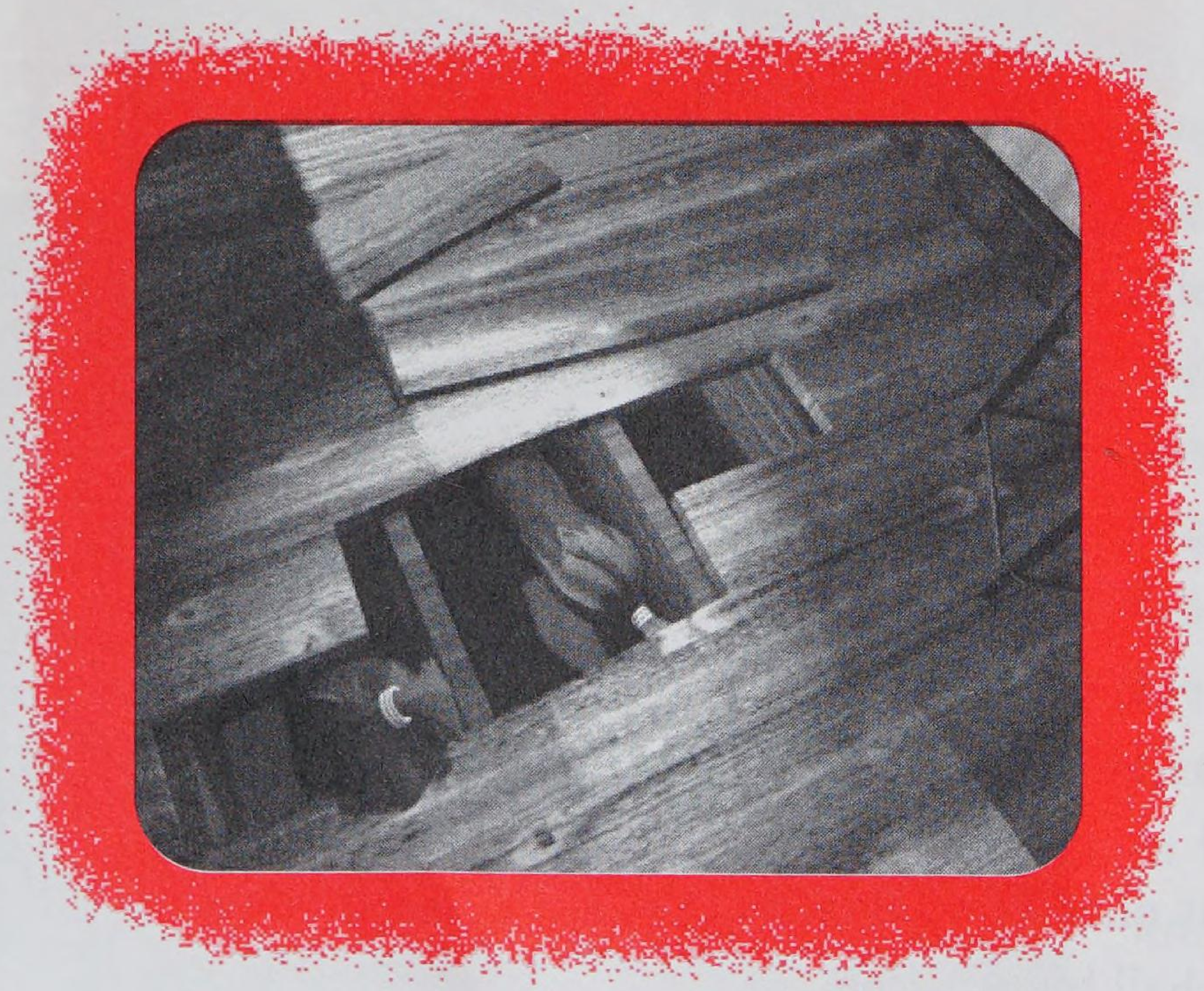
I ponder as I nervously pace to his chambers, though I do not enter. Steel myself, I must steel myself. Then the answer shall be made clear to me.



Of course! Why did I not think of it before? The kitchen–I must waste no time. There it is . . . the saw. That magnificent sleeve of steel . . . Now *his* blood runs cold.

At long last, the *coup de grace!* An odd room, this is. The old man has surrounded himself with such simple pleasures. Wonder what sort of mindless journeys into which his pitiful mind ventured? I leaf through the book on his desk. Homer? Hmm, perhaps I underestimated his lowly intelligence.

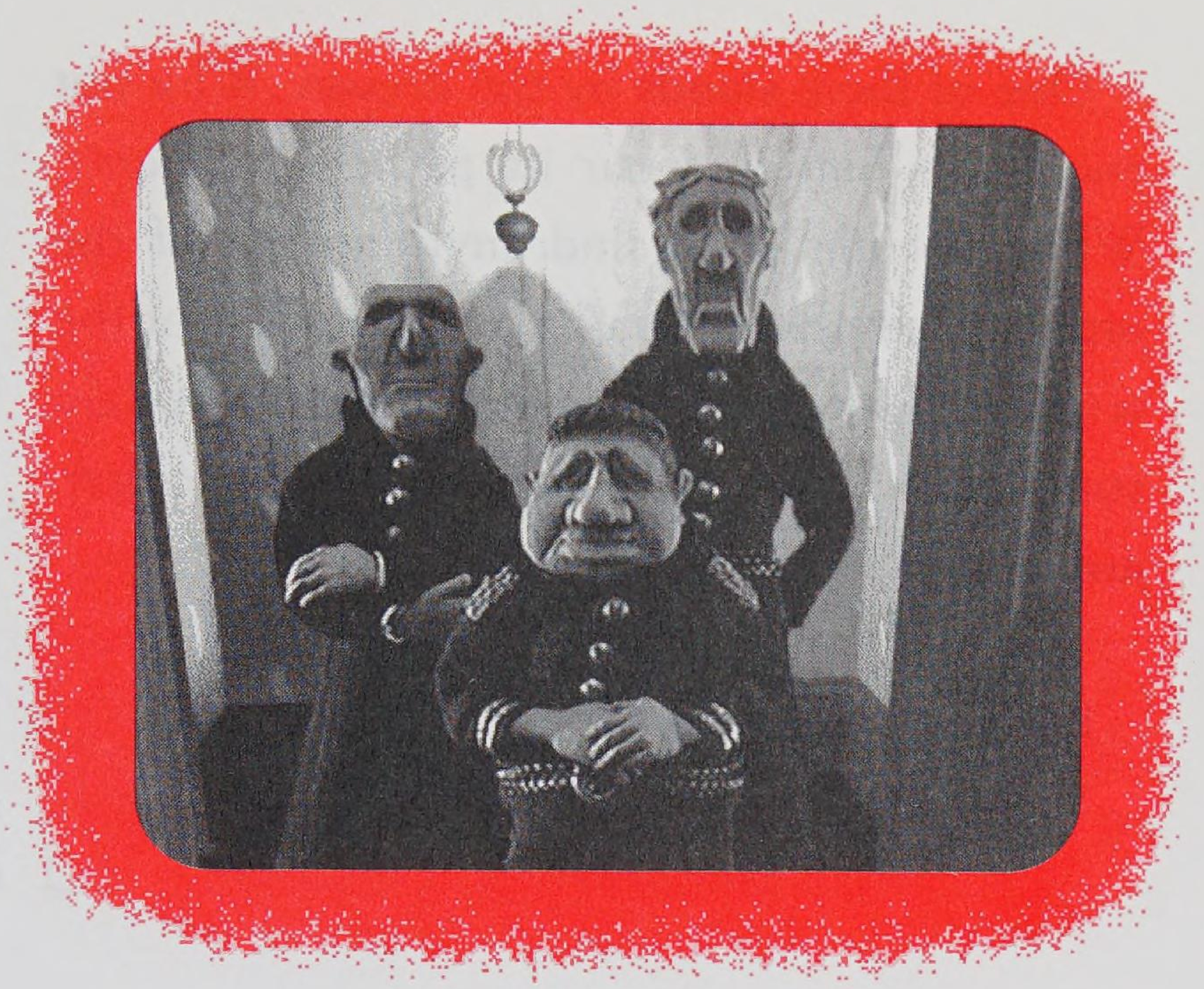
"Thus they: The Cyclop from his den replies:
"Friends, Norman kills me; Norman, in the hour
Of sleep, oppresses me with fraudulent power."



The scoundrel. He could never have known of my intentions. Foresight exists only in the mad. By the bane of my utter existence, I know this to be true.

What other frivolities did he allow himself? I know he keeps a trove in his dresser. Since he won't be needing these things anymore, it cannot hurt to take a look.

Hmm. A handful of change. I don't want his charity; I merely crave his soul.



Now then, back to the business at hand.

I loosen the floor boards. One by one, I toss the bloody bags under the foundation of this very house, under his own room! Such genius—no one will ever suspect! It is a shame such innovation shall go unnoticed. Nonetheless, I quickly replace the boards.

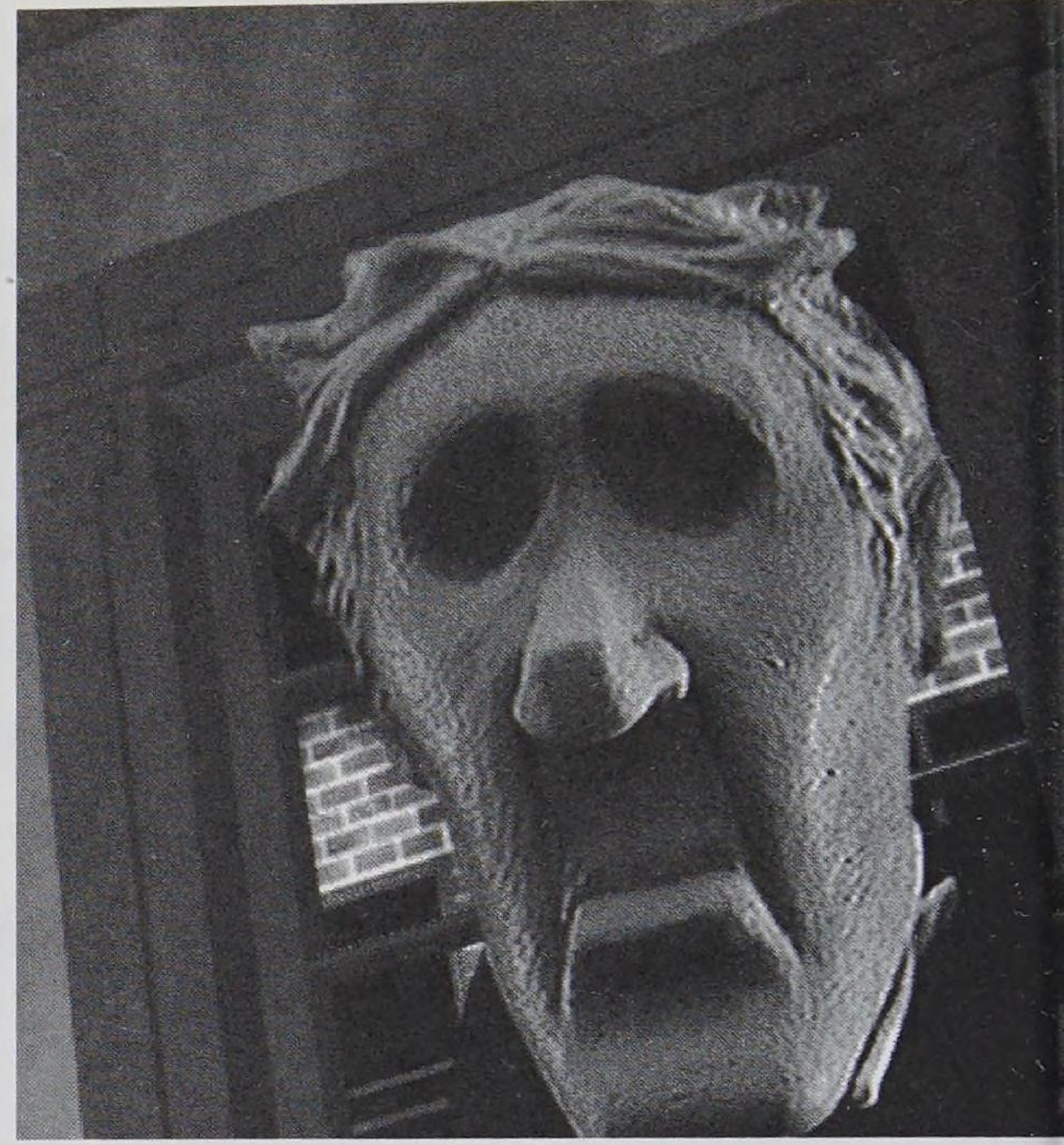
A knock? Who in God's name can that be at this hour? I hurry to the front door and open it to a trio of policemen. What could they possibly want from me? Best to allow them entrance, I suppose.

. . .

A scream? they ask.

Given to nervous fits . . .my cunning reply nullifies the question. I see no reason to deny them their request to search the premises. After all, I have nothing to hide; nothing their meager brains shall detect. I will, in fact, lead them to the old man's room. Why not? A job well done deserves some small recognition.

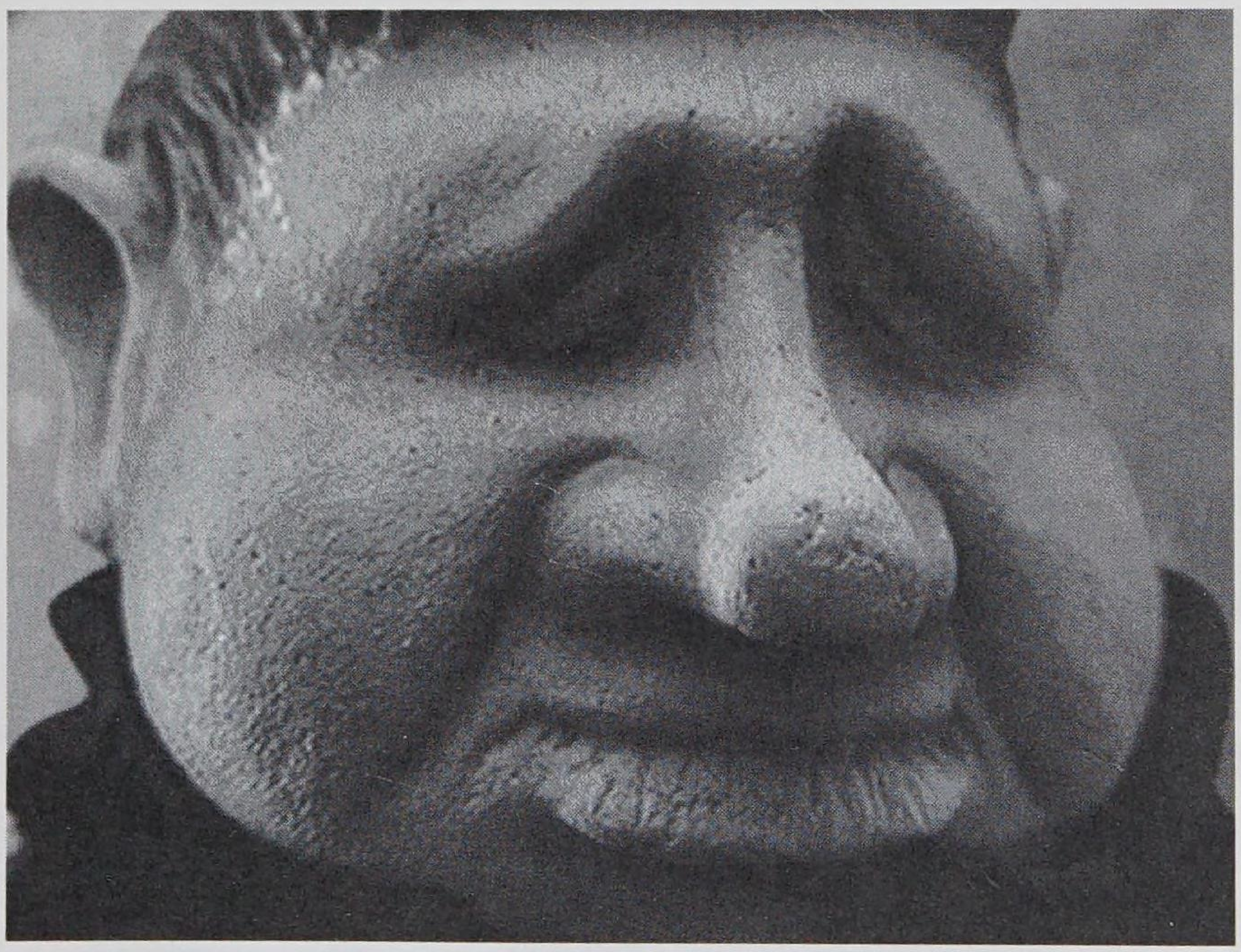
The true test: I'll offer them a seat to rest their weary bones. Standing erect and calm in the doorway, how composed I must appear to these insignificant guardians of the law. I swipe a bead of perspiration from my brow. Have I something to fear? Surely not. They will never suspect me. My hospitality has assuaged them of my guilt. What utter brilliance!



One of them stands by the dresser. Why not encourage him to scour its pathetic contents. What fun! He won't find anything out of the ordinary, anything out of place! But what of the sergeant? I study his demeanor. He appears duly complacent, but I encourage him to stay longer, just in case.

But wait . . .

What is that horrible ringing?



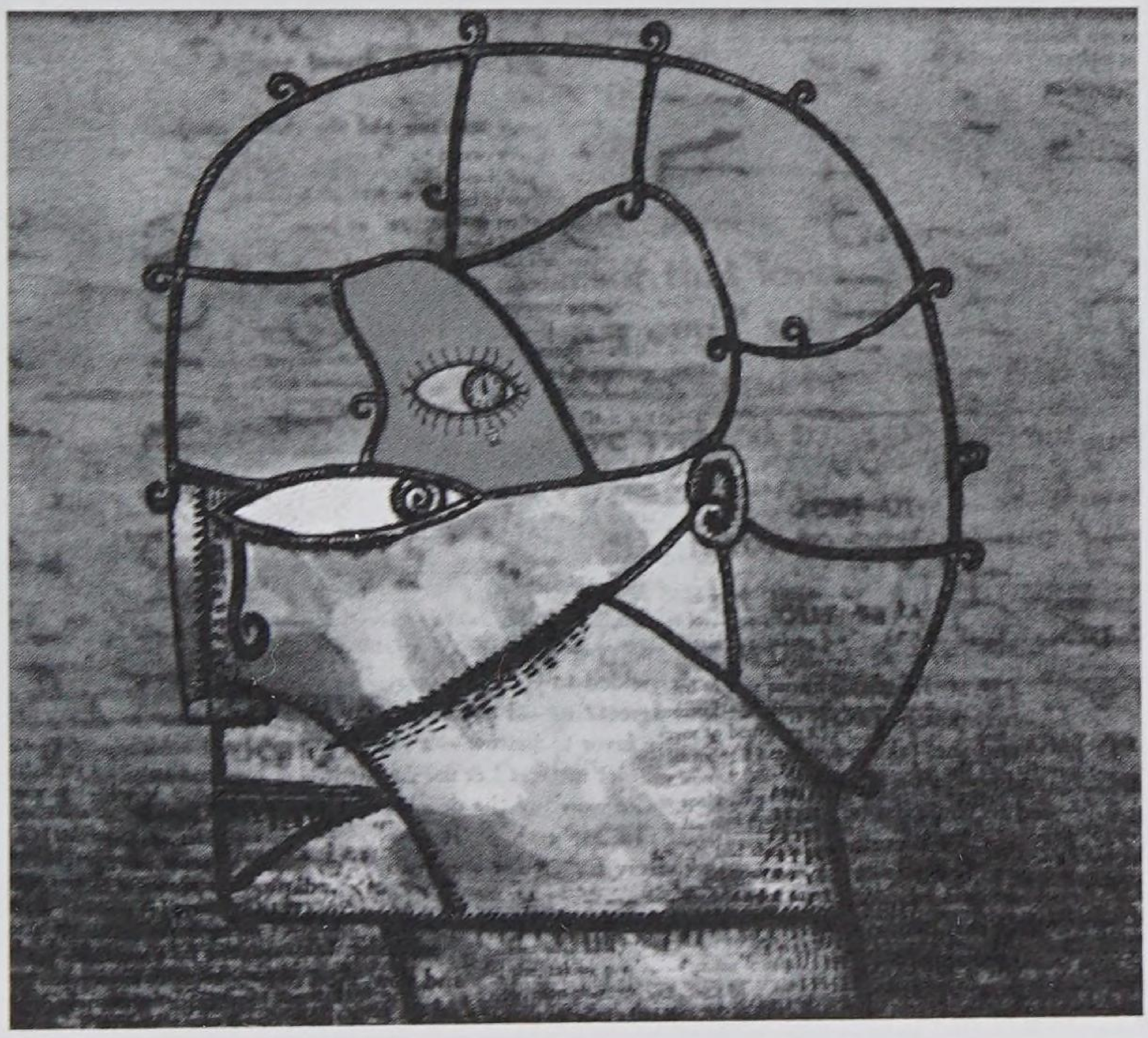
From whence does it come? Can they not hear it? That pounding . . . that percolating . . .

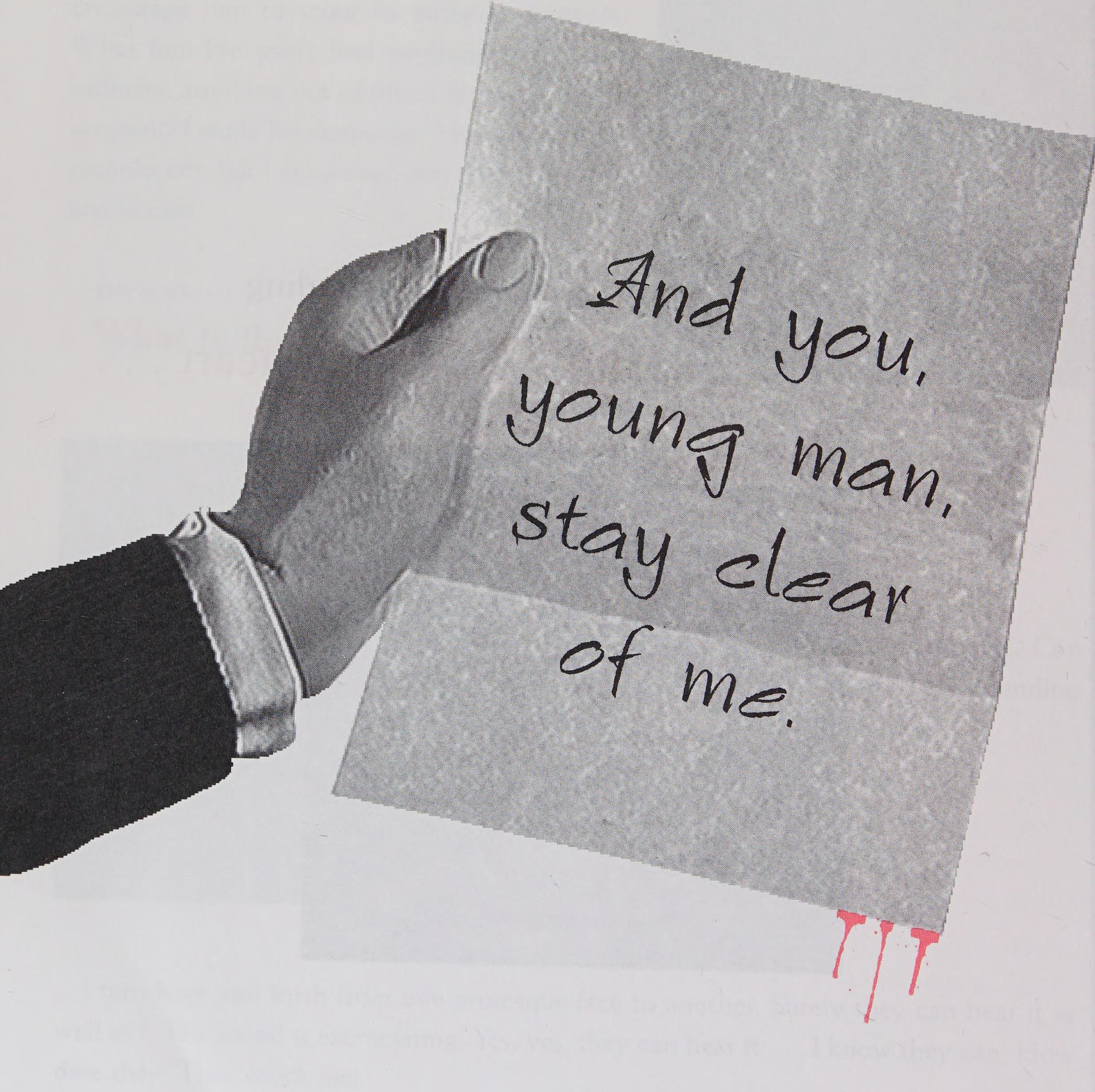
I turn back and forth from one grotesque face to another. Surely they can hear it as well as I. The sound is excruciating. Yes, yes, they can hear it . . . I know they can. How dare they! They mock me!

I can take no more. . .

Stop! I must stop it . . . quell the pounding . . .

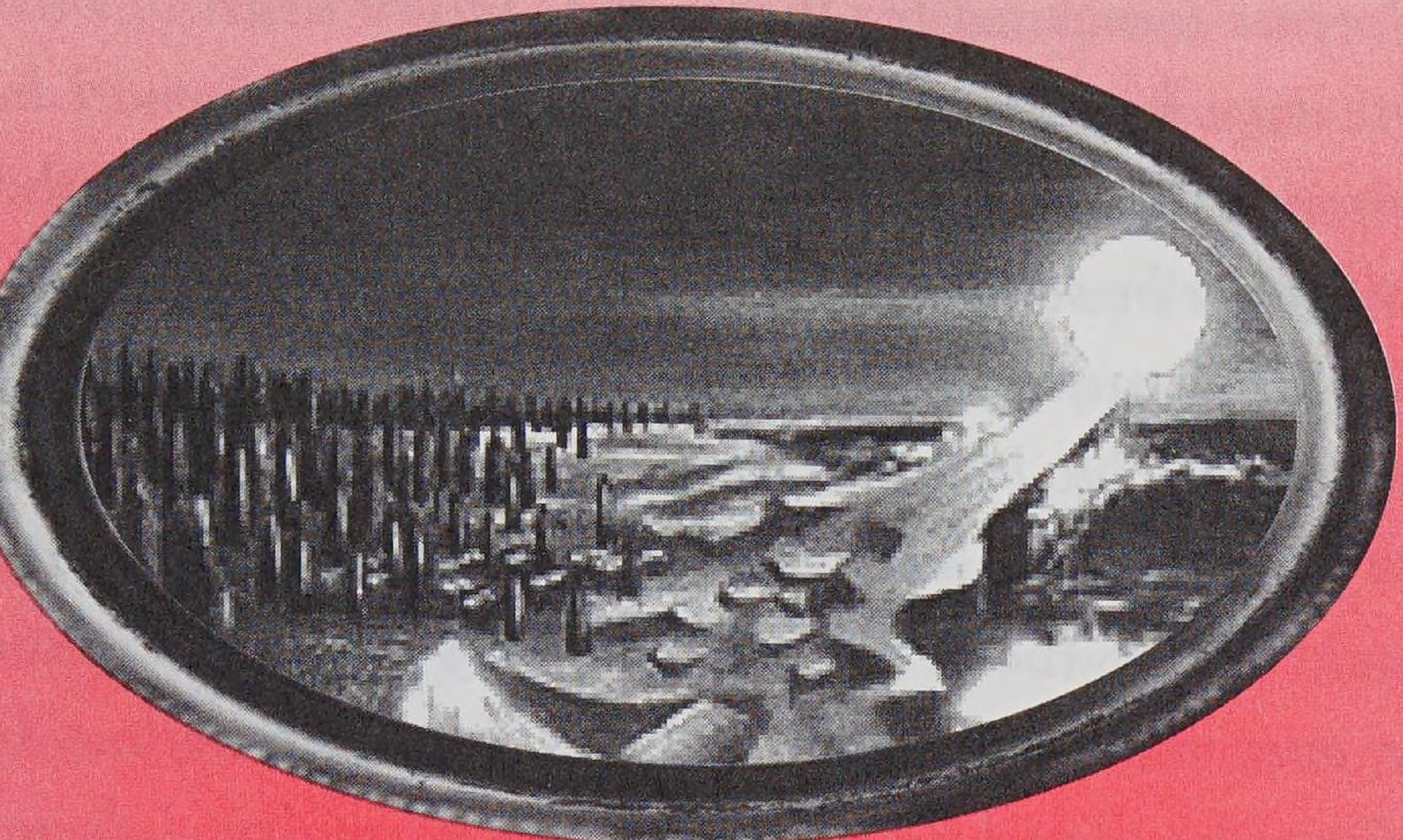
of his bloody, beating heart . . .





And you,
young man,
stay clear
of me.

Chapter 3



Malevolence: Day Two

October 9, 1809

What is this wretched burning in my head that emanates from behind my eyes, blurring my vision to the point of insanity? And this horrible thumping in my chest, as if my very heart seeks release from my tormented body?

I can think of no reason for these wretched abominations, but somehow I have sight of their cause. "A man sees only that which the eye will allow, and nothing more." Nothing more, indeed. I have seen much in my travels, enough to know that the eyes are the window to the soul—indeed, the window to Hell.

Malevolence: Day Two

The aged are forever tormented by the young. In my heart of hearts, I know this to be true. The devil may be chained in the dungeon, but his mad handservant roams freely about the rooms of the house, infecting all who enter with the disease of the insane. Could this truly be so of my family's domain?

When I awoke this morning, the hypnagogic experience of the previous eve still clung heavily on my psyche. I felt unrested, yet restless. It was in this deleterious state that I once again found myself in Cousin Edwin's kitchen. I know not how nor why I was drawn back to this room, the portal of my hideous nightmare. Perhaps the difficult journey over the rough seas and the rugged coastline have unsettled my equilibrium more greatly than I had thought. For normally, I do not dream.

Once again, I sought out Ambers, in hopes he might have something on hand to soothe my frayed nerves. I went to the cellar, where I found him scraping a trowel across a brick. I must say, it gave me cause to wonder whether Cousin Edwin was getting his money's worth, given that Ambers appears to spend a great deal of time at this one tedious task.

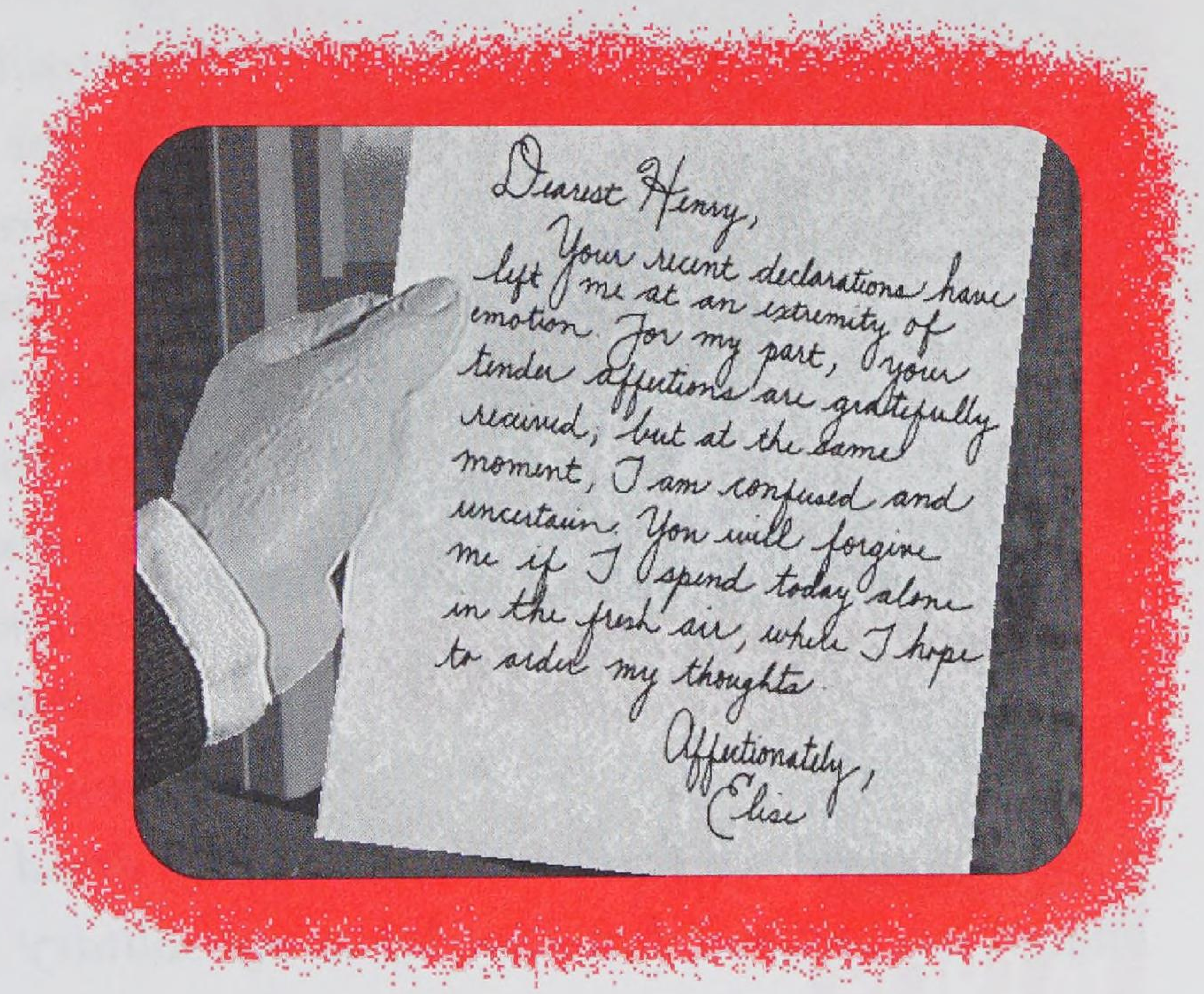
Well! Not only did Ambers not offer a remedy for my constitutional affliction, our brief encounter served only to further my agitation! How did he know anything of my dreams? I had confined myself to my quarters the entire morning in an attempt to center myself and had not seen nor spoken to a soul. Quite unnerving, indeed!

My ruminations about my dreamstate were soon transcended by a troubling turn of events with my fond relations. But I'm getting ahead of myself.

After leaving the cellar, I went to the library to catch up on my correspondence. As I approached the desk, I could not help but notice the letter laying there. My intent was merely to brush the papers aside without a glance, clearing space for me to perform my epistolary responsibilities. Before I could carry through with my honorable intentions, my eye caught Henry's signature. Oh, I make no excuse for my bad manners, reading a private missive—even though it has been some 14 years since I last saw or heard from my brother. Of course, I was curious about the circumstances that *had brought Henry to Edwin's, and he has been curiously uninterested in confiding in me since my arrival here. I must say, the letter gave me cause for concern, indicating my foolish brother has apparently gotten himself into yet another compromising position. I wonder if Elise is aware of this irresolute side of Henry's character?*

My attention was next drawn to a phrenology profile, a curious science I personally view with intense skepticism. A science of the mind? A map of the personality? I dare say, where will this lead? Next thing, these "doctors" shall be performing surgeries on hapless patients, carving out those portions of the brain to which these soothsayers attribute the unpleasant or deviant personality trait! Barbaric! Preposterous! For my own amusement, I picked up the offending document. Upon closer examination, I realized the drawing bore a striking resemblance to Ambers. Then, I noticed scrawled in Edwin's handwriting these barely decipherable words: Ambers cranium is a perfect example of a criminal shape. *Surely my infinitely reasonable cousin places no stock in this phrenology nonsense! I'm certain it is merely a passing interest, an amusement—unlike his painting, which seems to consume him.*

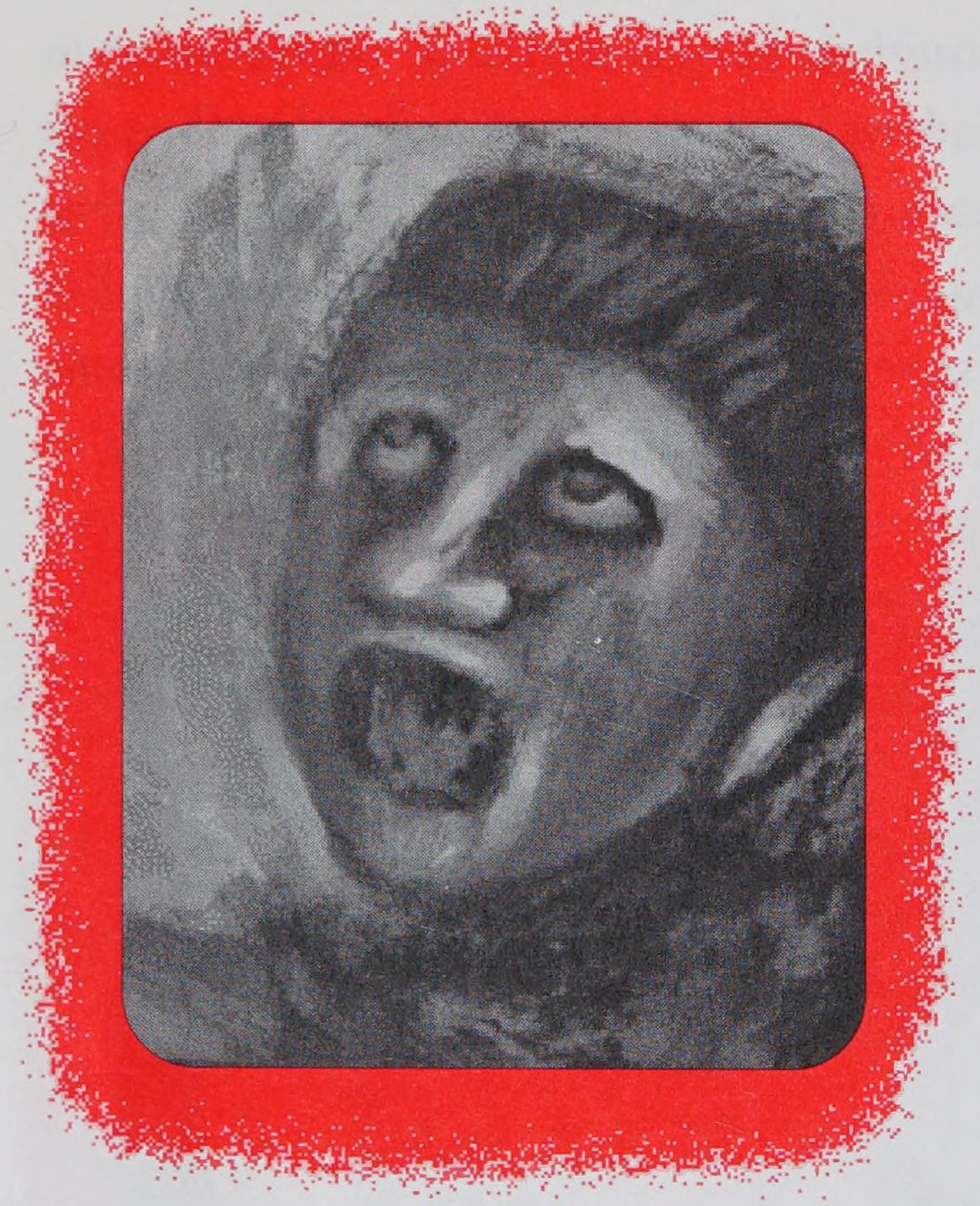
With many questions and concerns teasing my mind, I determined to go speak with Henry. I found him upstairs in the guest room, in quite a frenzied state. I no sooner entered the room than he blurted out his astonishing proposal. I stepped closer, not knowing whether to congratulate or console him, for surely he must comprehend the complexity of his desires.



Dearest Henry,
Your recent declarations have left me at an extremity of emotion. For my part, your tender affections are gratefully received; but at the same moment, I am confused and uncertain. You will forgive me if I spend today alone in the fresh air, while I hope to order my thoughts.
Affectionately,
Elise

I followed him to the window, hoping to reason with him. Of course, he would hear none of it and bolted out of the room as a soul possessed. In his haste, he dropped a slip of paper, which I retrieved and quickly scanned. Oh, the follies of reckless youth!

I dashed after Henry, hoping to catch him before he did something foolish, but alas, he had disappeared from sight. Thinking I should speak earnestly with Edwin before the situation progressed further, I took myself to his studio. Surprisingly, the studio was empty. The pervasive odor of wet paint and thinner permeated the air within those walls. Edwin had obviously been hard at work earlier—perhaps through the night. I do not recall him retiring to his bed chambers nor leaving them this morn.

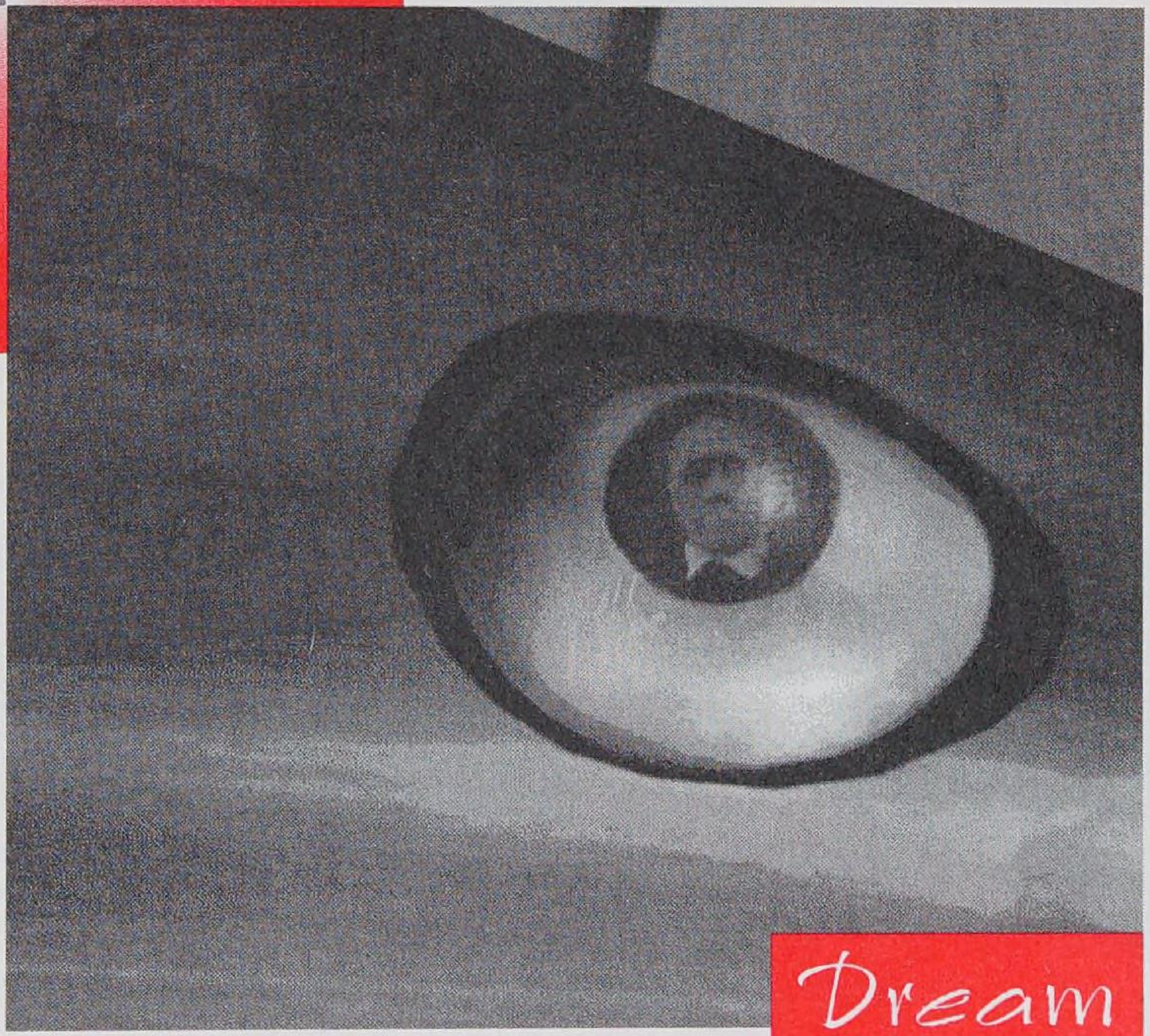


On impulse, I went directly round to the front of the easel to view my cousin's most recent artistic endeavor. Truly, my heart did pound mightily in my chest at the sight before me! Next, I turned to look at another new painting on the floor, leaning against the wall by the windows. I approached the portrait, seduced by the ghastly expression on the subject's face. Just then, Edwin appeared behind me. I turned to face him, too startled and dumbfounded to speak. Before I could find my tongue, he darted from the room in great irritation.

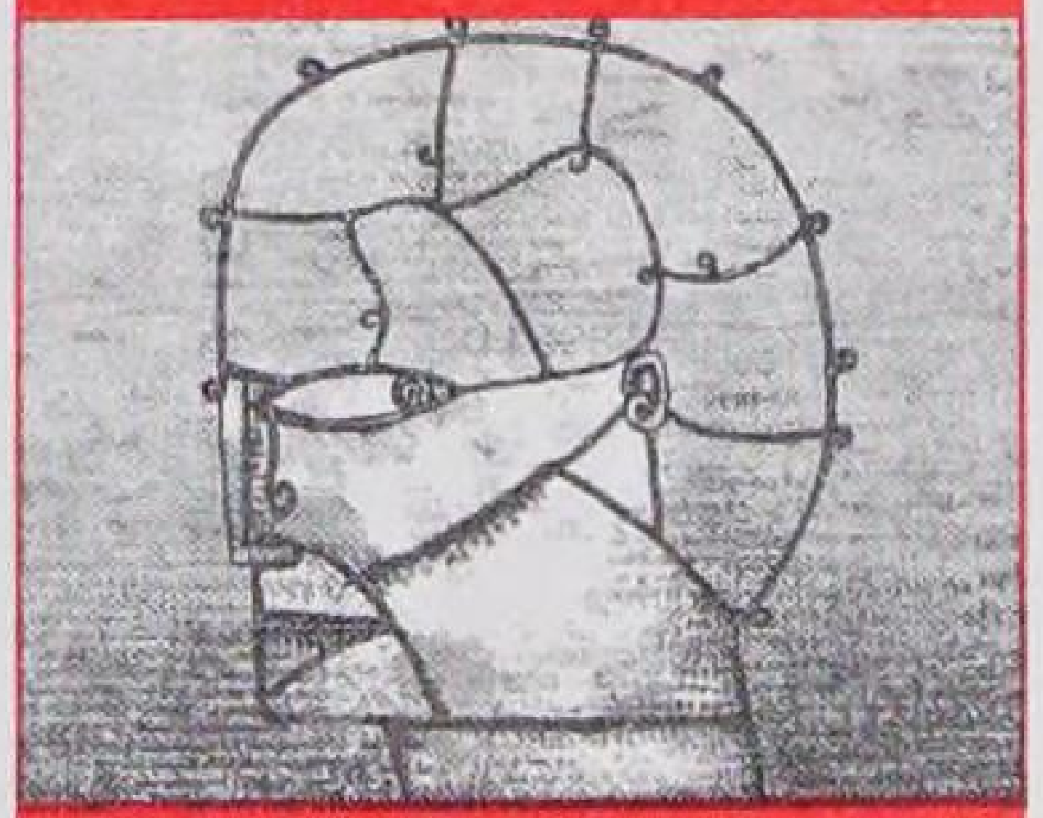
I ran after him, hoping to quell the rising emotions of my relatives before a horrid confrontation transpired. I followed the sound of angry voices to the stairwell, sickened to find my fears realized. It is my dread of exactly these types of troublesome human interactions that have led to my solitary nomadic existence.

By then, the sickness of my heart was joined by a churning of my abdomen and a halo of pain again gripping my skull. A velvet haze cloaked my vision and a maddening collage of hushed voices deafened me. Seeking relief, I returned to the Kitchen, intending once and for all to locate a tonic—or at least, a warm mug of milk.

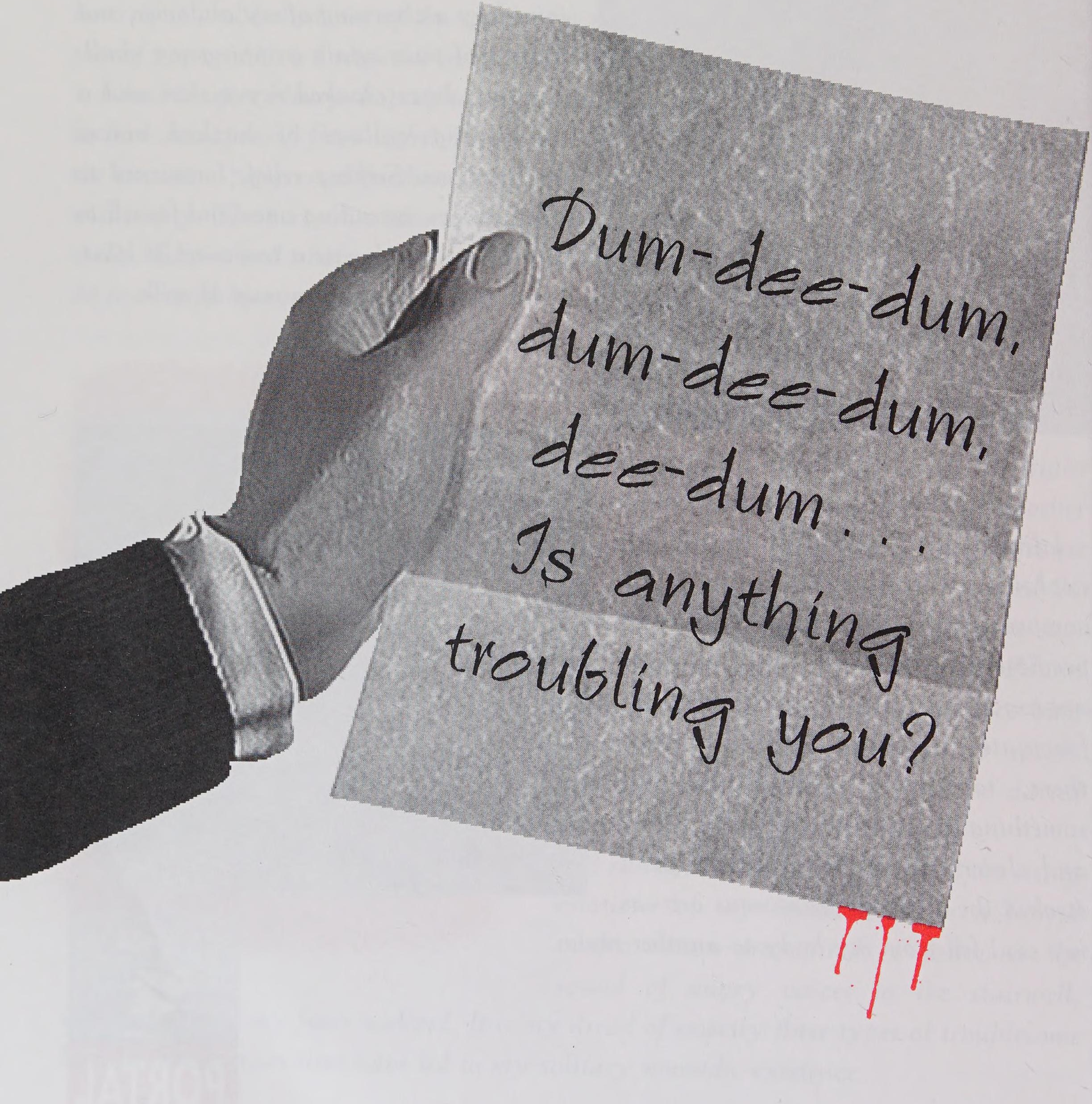
I find this difficult to explain, impossible to comprehend, but again, as with the previous night, I felt compelled to approach the butcher table. I became fascinated with the dead fish lying there, tomorrow's supper. Its eye, something about its eye, drew me closer and closer. And then, God help me, I stroked the clammy, gelatinous orb—as my soul fell from my body to another realm. . .



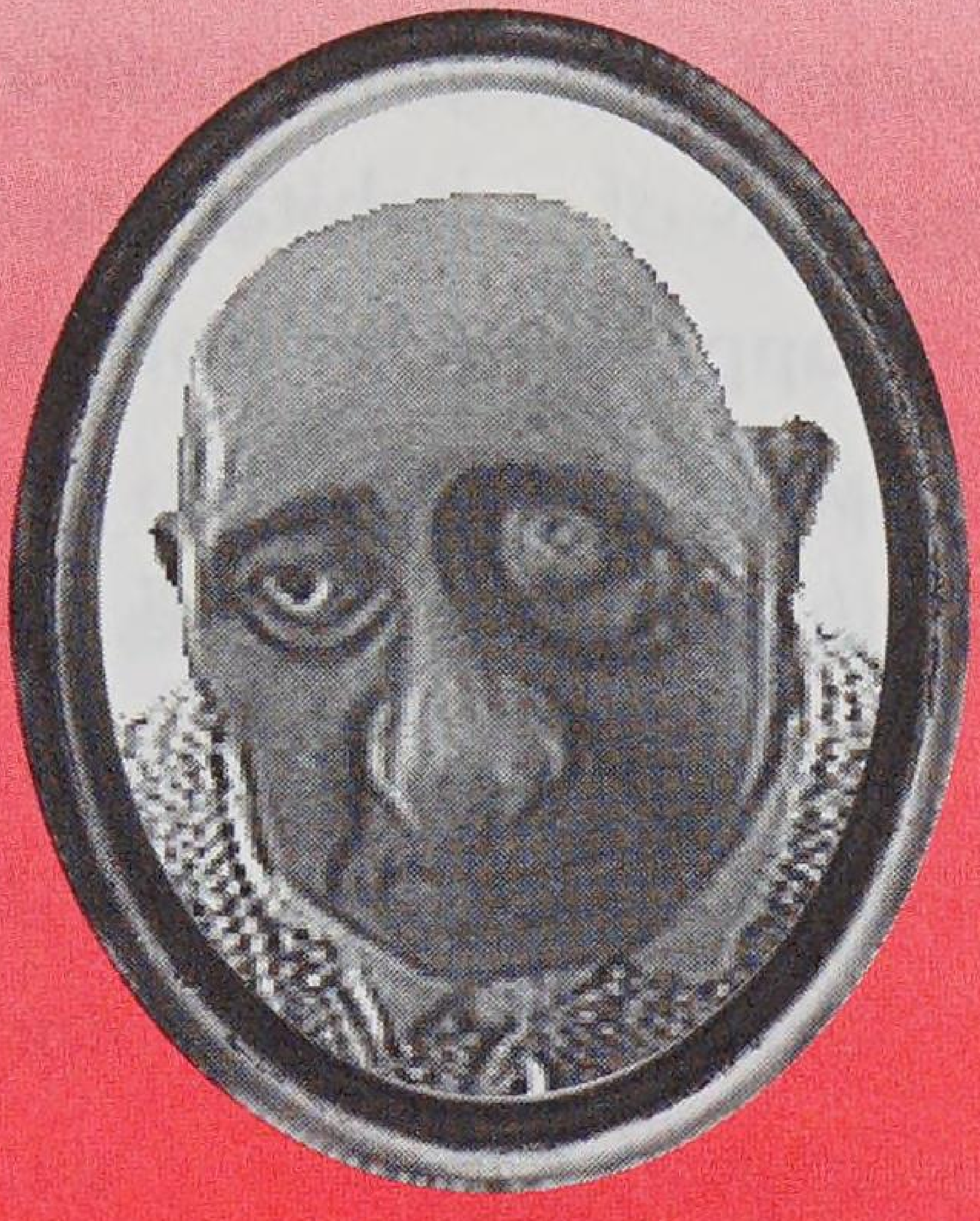
Dream



PORTAL


Dum-dee-dum,
dum-dee-dum,
dee-dum...
Is anything
troubling you?

Chapter 4



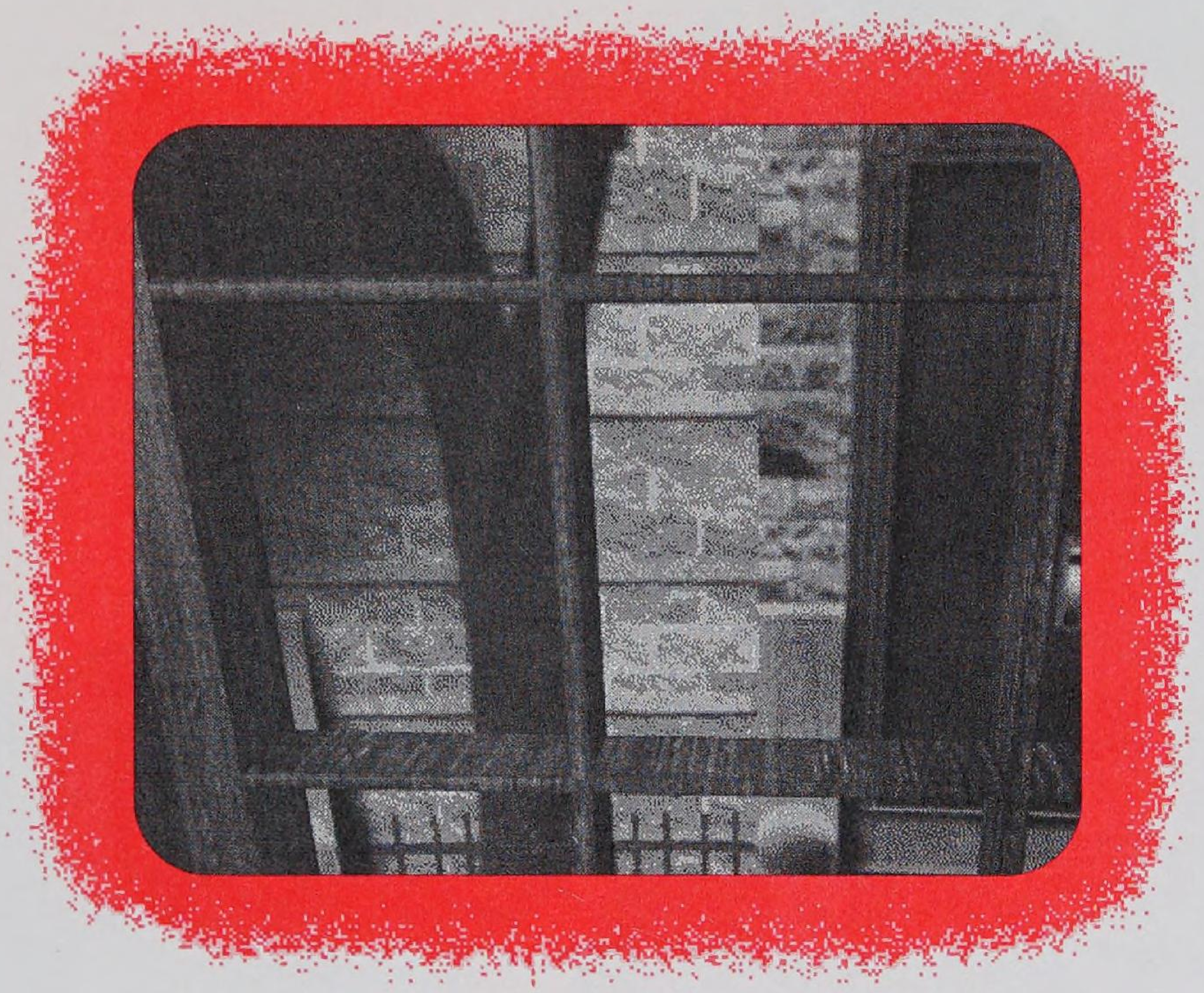
The Tell-Tale Heart:

The Old Man

New York City, 1845

I cannot, for the life of me, recall when, where, or exactly how I first made my acquaintance with the young gentleman with whom I now share my humble abode. I had given no consideration to taking in a boarder, content to live alone with the rich memories of my dear departed bride, Marguerite. Yet, into my meager but pleasant existence he has come. Surely it is not the few coins he contributes that led to this strange liaison. Perhaps companionship perpetuated his arrival, though alone I am not lonely, my beloved's presence always near. Indeed, I have grown fond of this stranger, though his nervous disposition precludes true fellowship despite these many months of cohabitation.

Increasingly, he has taken to disappearing for portions of the day, indeed, as he has today, with no word as to his whereabouts. Or isolating himself in his quarters, sketching and mumbling to himself for hours on end. Or pacing about the house late at night, as if waiting . . . waiting.



He seemed especially out of sorts this morning, departing early without so much as a sip of tea nor a spoon of porridge. It's no wonder he is rail thin. Now, here it is, nearly supper. Wonder where the lad has got to? Oh my! The soup! Mustn't let it scorch. I'd best keep it on a low flame, so it will be nice and fresh for our dinner.

Surely he'll soon return. Perhaps he has engaged in a game of checkers with the young man down the way. I'll just take a peek out of the window, see if I can spot him. No, my companion is nowhere in sight. Ah, but there goes our policeman, hurrying by too quickly for me to hail him, "Hello, Officer! Lovely evening!" This new generation, always in a hurry, fretting and fussing to get this and that, go here and there. "Slow down," I want to call to them, "Stroll through the park! Sit, sit on the grass, listen to the birds sing, count your blessings in the clouds!"

If not for my blasted arthritic hip, I'd take a little stroll this grand day myself. It is giving me such fits; there must be rain on the way. I'll just sit down here at the table and read the paper. My God, does my clouded vision read this correctly? I cannot imagine a worse fate–the poor innocent lamb's terror. Ach! I can read no more of such horror! It is atrocities such as this that make one wish to be completely blind, no more to see the suffering in the world.

As impaired as my vision is, I clearly see suffering. Indeed, I look into the face of anguish daily. Yes, he suffers, of that I'm certain, from what or whose hands I do not know, for he agonizes in silence. As time goes by, perhaps he'll take me into his confidence.

. . .

My, the hour grows late. Is that him approaching? Can't seem to see from here. I'll just hobble on over to the window . . . Is that him? Heavens, old man! I've mistaken a tree for a man! He's thin, but really! How calm the streets are this late hour of the afternoon. Reminds of romantic days gone by. Why, it just occurred to me! Perhaps my young cohort has found himself a lady friend. Yes, yes! Of course! That explains his nervous preoccupation. What a delightful thought!

How well I remember the palpitations of the heart that young romance brings. Is there anything more enticing, yet more agitating, than falling in love? And what could possibly be more exquisitely satisfying than lasting love? Dear me! That rumbling emitting from within me is certainly not the sound of a racing heart–it is the groaning of my empty belly. What time has it gotten to be?

With my cloudy vision, I do get my exercise gadding about the room. I remember the day when I could see that clock from the street looking in. Now I must approach it closely, draw ever so near. Drats! And still I cannot see the time. Oh, the hour does grow late. No wonder my tummy complains!

Let me just take another quick look out the window, try to catch a glimpse of my absorbed house guest. After all, it's far more pleasant to share one's evening meal than to dine alone. Hmmm. He's nowhere in sight, still. Is he in some sort of trouble? I've often wondered what could have brought a man with his education and refinement to this station in life, down on his luck, as it were. Though I dare not ask, and he seems adverse to disclosing, I wonder if perhaps he has gotten himself into financial straits. I shall query him when he returns and offer what assistance I am able.

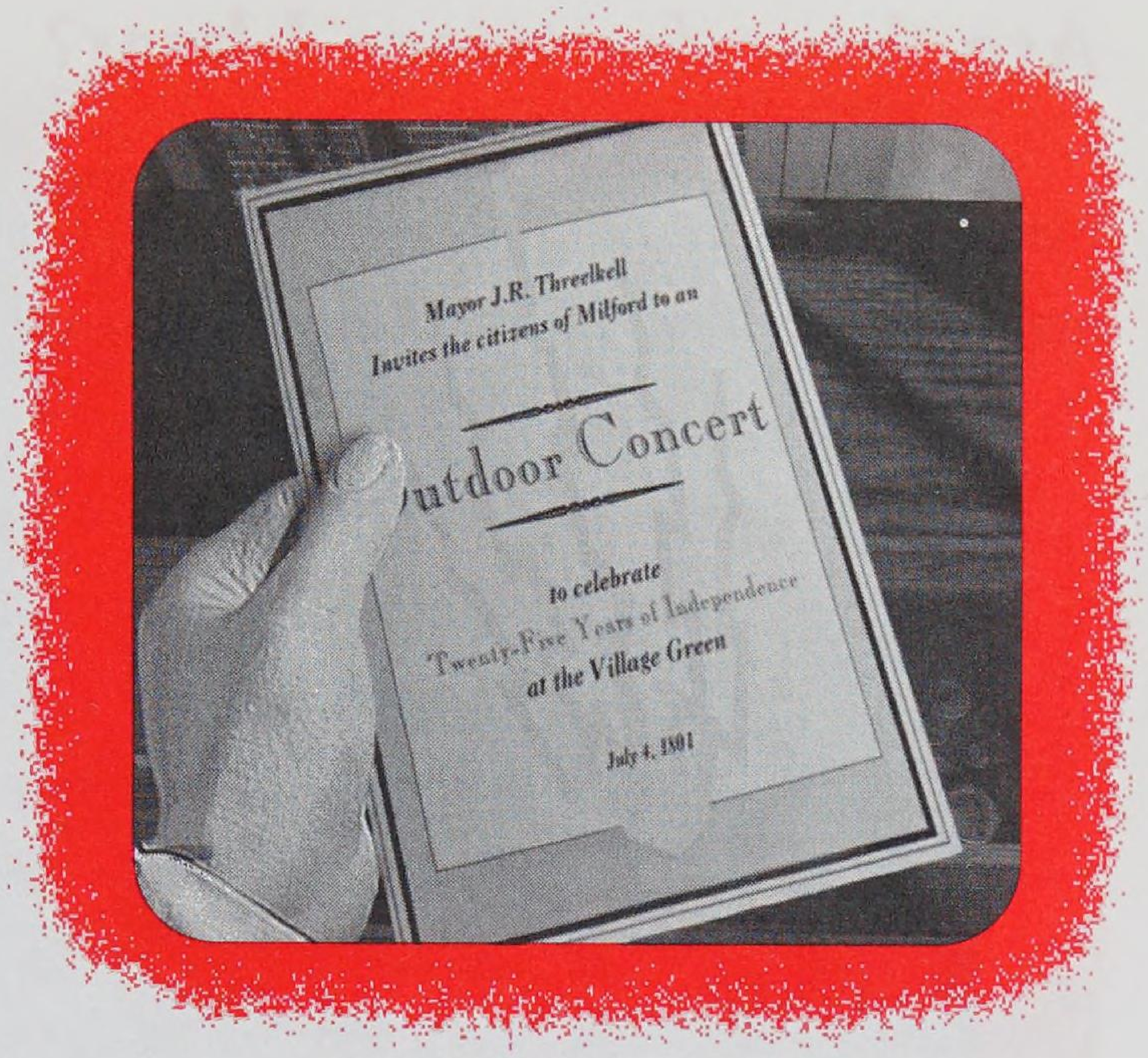
Meanwhile, hunger beckons. *Dum-dee-dum*. Take a bowl from the counter. *Dum-dee-dum*. Walk on over to the stove. *Dum-dee-dum*. Ladle some yum-dee-dum soup into the bowl. *Do-dee-do*.

Ah, the joy of simple satisfactions! It would do him well to put his troubles aside and learn to appreciate the common pleasures of life, like eating! Goodness, this soup is scalding. I'll just carry it to the table and set it down to cool. Perhaps my friend will arrive by the time it cools, and we can dine in hospitable companionship.

I move to the window in hopes of spotting my boarder and supper companion. There goes a neighbor, scurrying home to his dinner, I'm sure. Hmmm. The aroma of the hearty stew is simply too tempting to resist. Oops. See, it's tugging me back to the table. Oh, it feels good to sit down. With no further ado, I shall consume my meal, albeit alone, with my usual enjoyment. Ah, that hit the spot!

. . .

Well, I think it's time for a little stroll down memory lane, if I can drag my sated person from this chair and make my way to our bedroom. Listen to me! My darling Marguerite has been gone nigh on fourteen years, and I cannot bring myself to think of it as anything but "our" room. Mercy, this hall seems to grow longer each day. Old age, bah!



Mayor J.R. Threelkell
Invites the citizens of Milford to an
utdoor Concert
to celebrate
Twenty-Five Years of Independence
at the Village Green
July 4, 1801

Every time I open the door and enter our room, a warm happiness fills me. It has become my sanctuary, filled with such fond memories. I approach the dresser, pull open the top drawer, and gaze at my the treasures therein–paltry to most, but worth a fortune to me. I gather up the coins, the least of my riches, and count them. Yes, if he needs some financial assistance, I can spare a sixpence or so. Oh, and look! The concert program! Holding it in my hand, a flood of memories pass through my mind of that delightful afternoon when I met my darling Marguerite. *Om-pah-pah, om-pah-pah* the band played as we danced around the gazebo. I lift the wedding ring from the drawer, hold it gingerly in my palm, and once again I can almost feel her delicate hand in mine. Now don't go getting melancholy, old man!

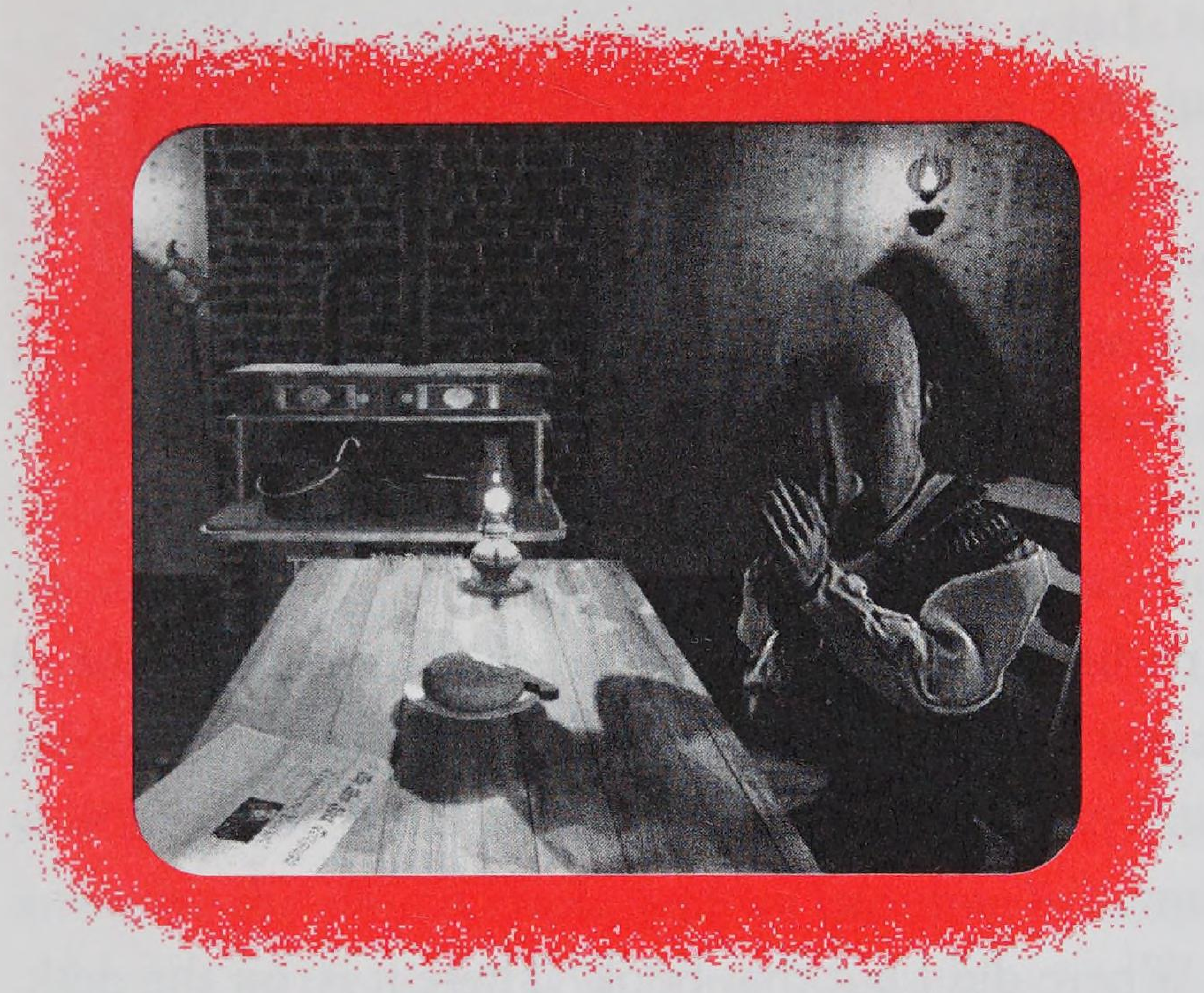
Perhaps I'll read to pass the time. Where did I put that book? There it is, on the desk. They say memory is the first to go. Ha! All of my facilities seem to have gone at once! Eyes, bones, memory, heart! What was I going to do? Oh, yes–read, such as my one lame eye allows. I shall sit at my desk in this most cheerful room and read for a spell. Quite an interesting book, but the effort of reading has fatigued me so. I must put it down.

As happens a dozen times each day, I am drawn to the lithograph on the bookcase. Holding it close to my heart enables me to once again partake in the beauty of her face. A smile plays on my lips as I gaze at the lovely woman smiling back at me–Marguerite, my Marigold, my wife. We will be together again, my love. One day soon I will join you for eternity.

. . .

Are those footsteps I hear?

I shake myself out of my reverie–return to the land of the living, old man! I hurry out of my room, and just as I step into the hall, I see my troubled tenant enter the front door.



I must scurry down the hall to the main room to bid him a good evening. There he is, already seated at the table. Oh dear, he is visibly distressed. How shall I approach him? Yes, I must approach him delicately. While I remove the bowl from the table, I discretely offer my counsel for whatever vexes him. His denial blatantly conflicts with his demeanor, but what can I do? He is so closed, so distant.

I find myself unusually unnerved by his distress tonight. In my anxious concern, I turn to the counter, then to the stove, and back around to face him, the bowl still in my hand. Goodness, I'm fumbling around like an old idiot! He'll think me daft! Perhaps some warm supper will improve his constitution. He flatly refuses my offer of supper. Poor man. He must indeed be love sick or in a dire predicament, too bothered to even nourish himself. I say, very little interferes with my appetite. I'll just have myself another quick bite of soup. Quite tasty, if I do say so myself.

Sigh. A most profound fatigue has suddenly come upon me, as it is wont to do of late. I can barely summon the energy to rise. It must be quite late. I turn toward the clock, staring futilely at its face. Oh, what matter the time. This weary old body must get off to bed. I turn to exchange a pleasant good night with my odd companion, then take my leave. I can't help but think that he should do the same, though I dare not trouble him more with my nagging. A decent night's rest, rather than marauding about the house in a nervous tizzy, might lift his spirits. Sleep, after all, restores the soul.

. . .

For some odd reason, I feel I must hurry down the hall as if being chased. What a silly old man I've become, letting my imagination run away from me. It is just that I am eager for the comforts of my bed chambers. Yes, that must be it. As is my custom, I must first go to the window and bid a silent good night to my neighbors, past and present. When we first arrived at this little apartment, Marguerite bristled at our "sterling view of a brick wall," but we both soon grew to appreciate the close proximity of our good–and entertaining–neighbors. Oh, the times we had standing side-by-side, watching the dramas of life unfold before us, safe in our cozy quarters.

Sleep beckons. It is high time to relinquish the quandaries of the waking world for the solace of my dreams. I turn to the desk and pinch out the candle. With a grateful sigh, I climb into bed and fall into a fitful sleep.

My sleep is so disturbed, I cannot tel for certain that I am asleep at all. Are these merely dreams? Image after image dances mockingly through my head. Marguerite? It that you, my darling? I reach out to caress my beloved wife, but a haunting apparition chases her from my grasp. Another more hideous, yet familiar specter invades my sleep. Be gone! I swipe at them! Leave me to my peace!

What's that?

A grating sound . . .

a cricket?

Silence.

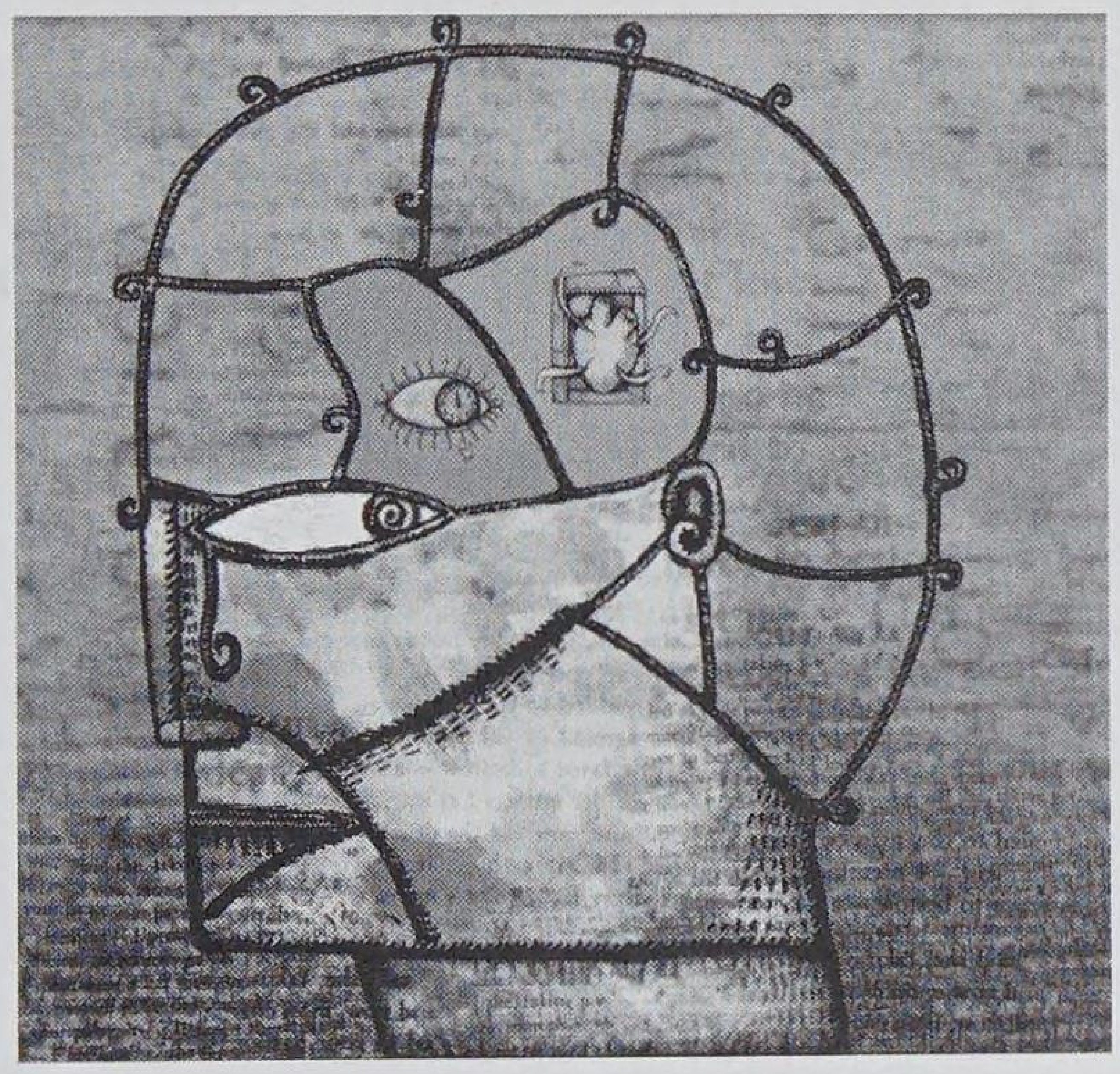
Another sound . . .

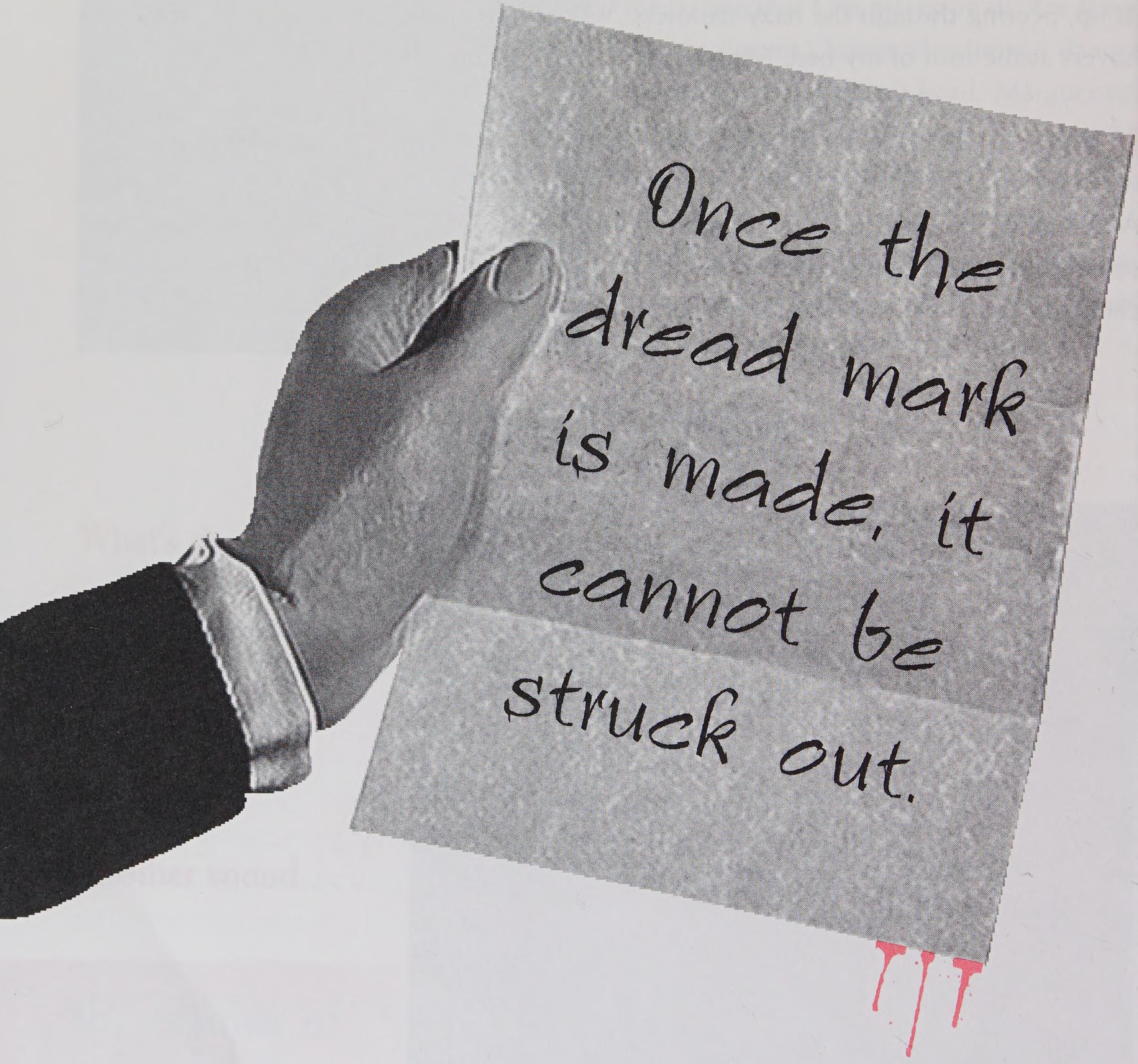
the rustling of a footstep?

I gaze through the velvet blackness of the night. I see nothing, but feel a presence. I sit up, peering through the hazy darkness. What is that I see? My God! A ghostly form hovers at the foot of my bed. Marguerite? Have you come for me?

No. NO! It is not my beloved. Something evil lurks here. I feel it. I smell it's evil.

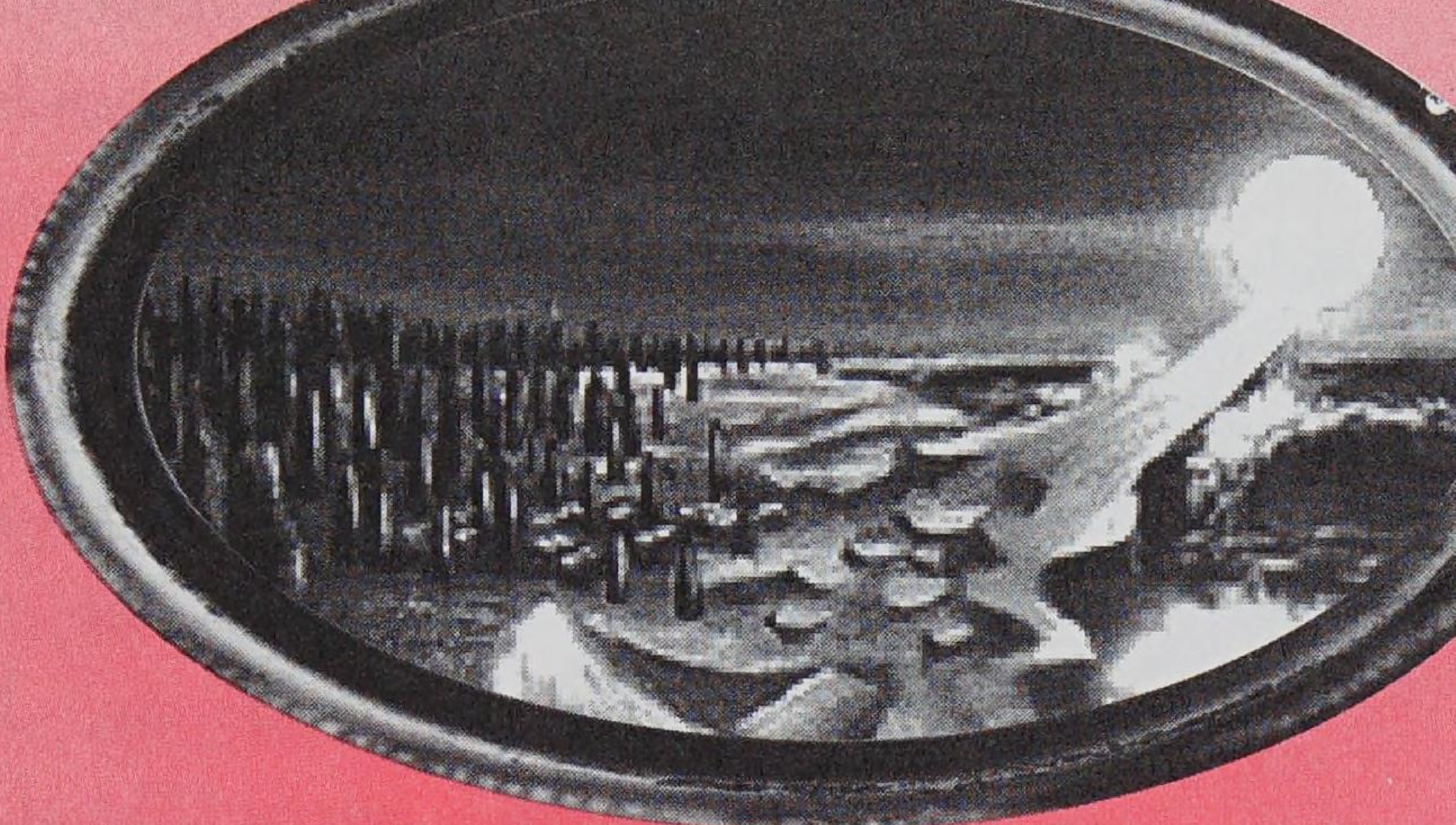
A sickening fear grips my pounding heart. Augh! A piercing light blinds me. Someone, something approaches. My heart shall surely burst! Dear God, what is this madness! I cannot breathe! Darkness surrounds me, complete and utter darkness . . .





Once the dread mark is made, it cannot be struck out.

Chapter 5



Malevolence: Day Three

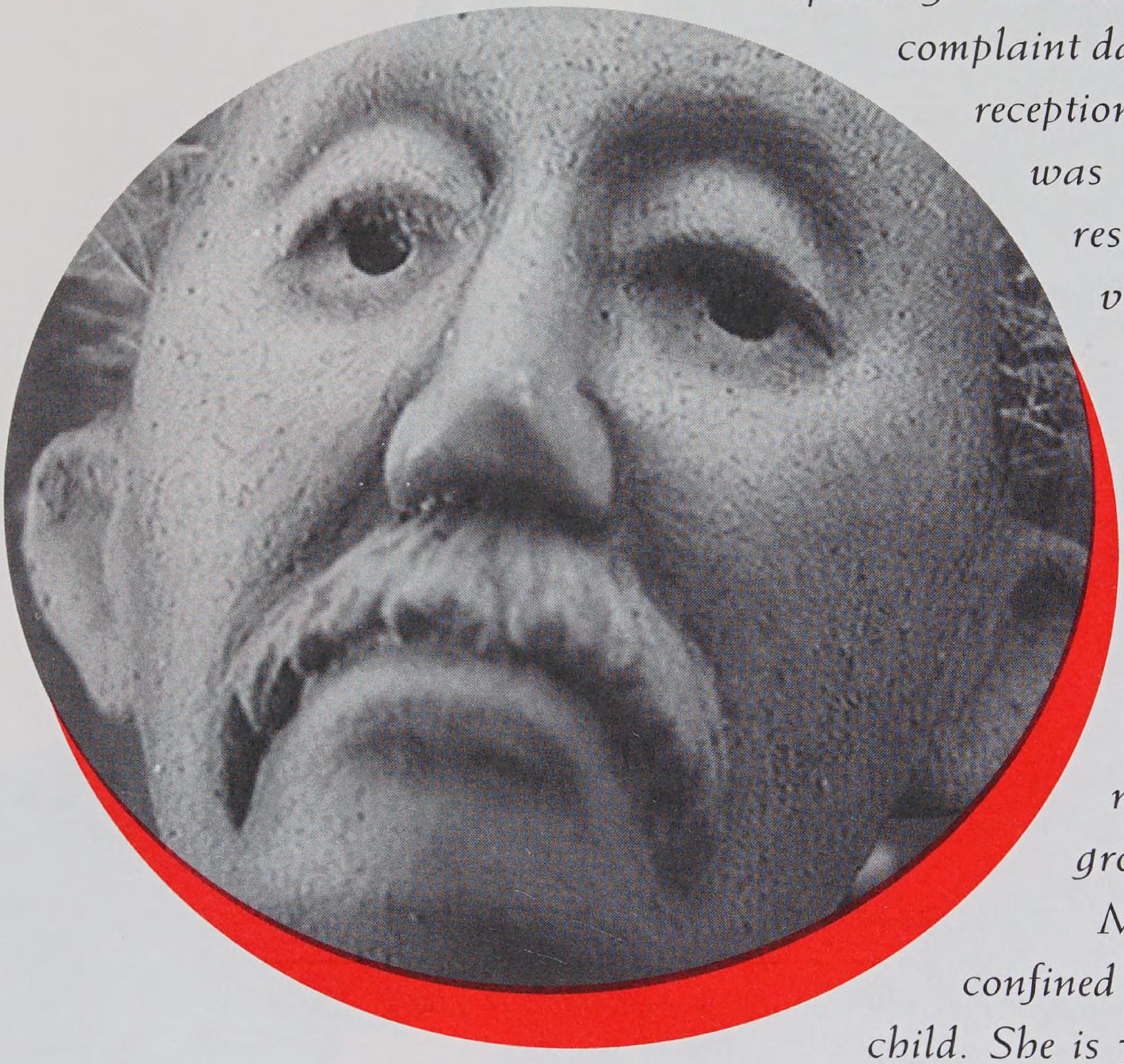
October 10, 1872

For reasons beyond my comprehension, this morning I found myself once again in Edwin's kitchen. I stood there before the butcher block in stunned disbelief, my senses tingling with increasing intensity as my faculties slowly returned to me, as if awakening from a trance. A chill cursed through my spine as I again looked upon the cold, hypnotic eye of the fish. Has my constitution been so ravaged from my trying journeys that my mind parts with reason in the dark hours of the night? No, surely not. Perhaps I have been drugged. How? Why? Who might I inquire about these matters? Ambers . . . yes, Ambers.

Malevolence: Day Three

My intuition tells me Edwin's trusted employee knows something of what induces the agitated state that afflicts me, if not a curative to restore my peace of mind.

So it was that I took myself to the cellar, where Ambers spends each morning, repeating the same mundane tasks without complaint day after day. Judging from his reception to my entrance, clearly, he was of no mind to assist me in resolving the curious ailment vexing me. I withheld my query. Yet, I felt and do feel strongly that he knows the source of the delirium infecting this household. That he is somehow behind it has occurred to me, though these thoughts may merely be the seeds of my growing paranoia.



My thoughts returned to Elise, confined to her room like a naughty child. She is young, indeed, but ever so an arresting woman. The poor dear, caught between the doting uncle who guided her through childhood and the man she longs to have lead her into womanhood. It truly poses a precarious situation. With these thoughts, I went upstairs to offer the dear girl a few words of encouragement. As I approached the door to Elise's bedroom, the sound of her anguished sobs crept under the doorway and gripped my heart. I did not enter nor knock, not wanting to intrude upon her misery.

Instead, I went downstairs in search of Edwin. I found him, as usual, in the studio and approached him with the intent of appealing to his reason on behalf of Elise and Henry. He gave me little opportunity to plead my case before launching a verbal assault the likes of which I've never before witnessed from the man. The tirade he hurled at me was riddled with senseless rage and, I dare say, more than a hint of irrationality. All the while, he fussed with the lantern, filling it to the brim with . . . why, I do believe he filled it with paint thinner. What a curious choice of fuel. The fumes must be ghastly.

I stepped to the window to see whether Ambers had pried open the windows as I had requested several days past. Confound it! He had not. I glanced down at the floor and was taken aback at the new painting there, leaning against the wall. The gruesome portrait added to my discomfiture. With Edwin's tirade still ringing in my ears, I turned and left the studio as quietly as I could. I determined to return later when Edwin had calmed.

Next, I immediately headed for Henry's room, hoping we could put our heads together to develop a strategy with which to resolve the impasse with Edwin. My overriding objective was to restore balance to this house and harmony within my family. As I passed the conservatory, music rang through the house, lending a false note of cheerfulness to this troublesome day. I opened Henry's door and looked in, but he was not there. A feeling of inexplicable dread came over me. Where had he got to, *or what had got to him? My brother has always been plagued with the very worst of luck, falling into one predicament after another, backing himself into adverse corners, throughout his twenty-seven years on this Earth. Into what misadventure had he now fallen, I worried?*

I went to the conservatory, wondering if perhaps the two love birds had been so foolish as to flaunt their disregard for Edwin's demands with a duet. So as not to startle or interrupt them, I discretely knocked on the door of the conservatory. Elise beckoned me in. When I entered, I was somewhat surprised but ultimately relieved to find her alone. I went to my sorrowful cousin, lending her what small comfort I could, a compassionate ear, a shoulder to lean on. Against Edwin's stern admonitions—and my own better judgment—I accepted a missive from Elise with a promise to deliver it to Henry at my earliest convenience. How could I refuse her heartfelt request?

Elise then invited me to accompany her as she sang. She shares my predilection for music, using it, as I do, as a balm for the afflicted soul. I placed the letter on the piano and began to play, as Elise burst forth with an enchanting aria. Mid-song, she suddenly gasped. I turned to see what was the matter, and to my horror, watched helplessly as blood oozed from the silenced song bird's very mouth.

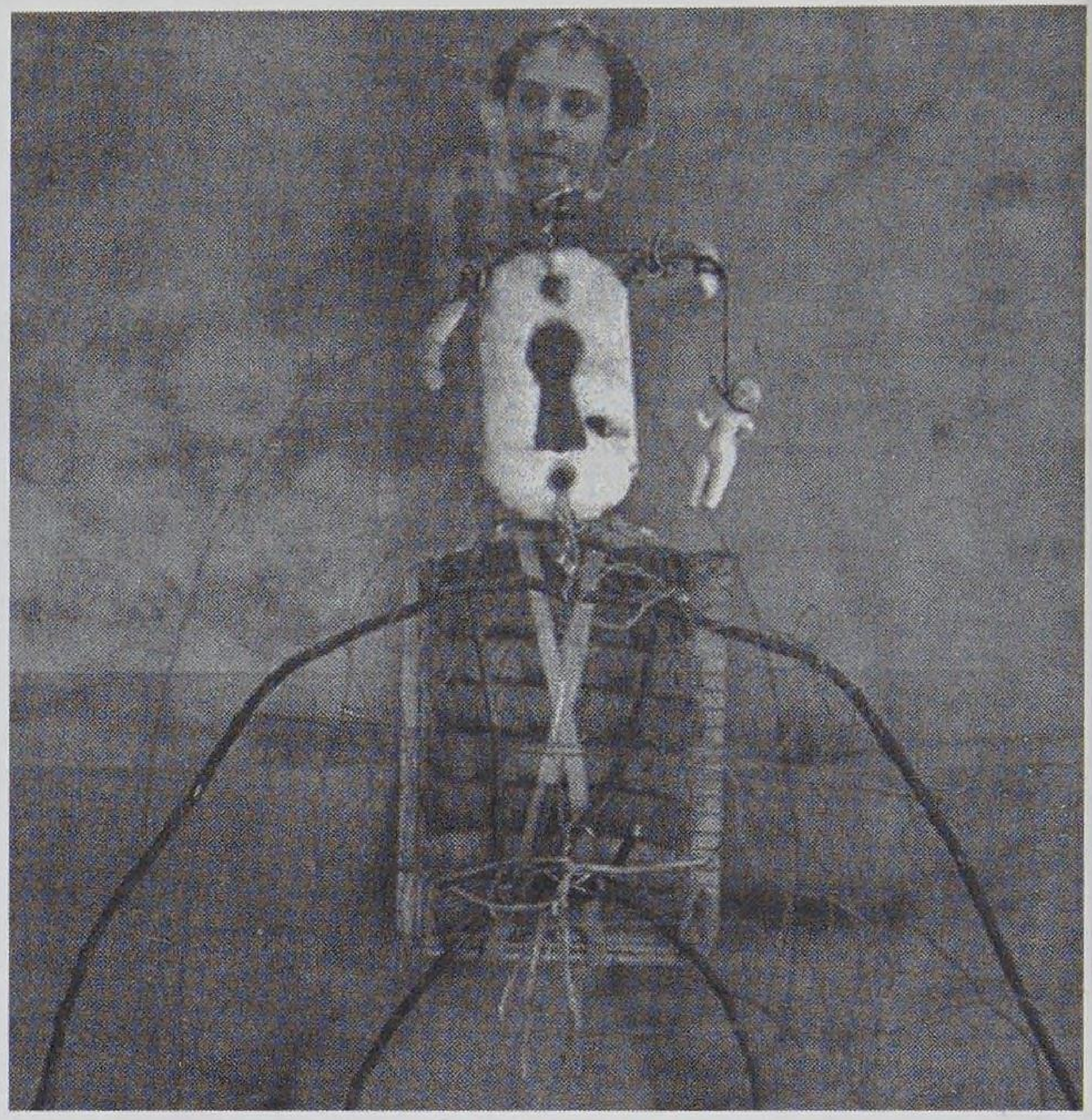
. . .

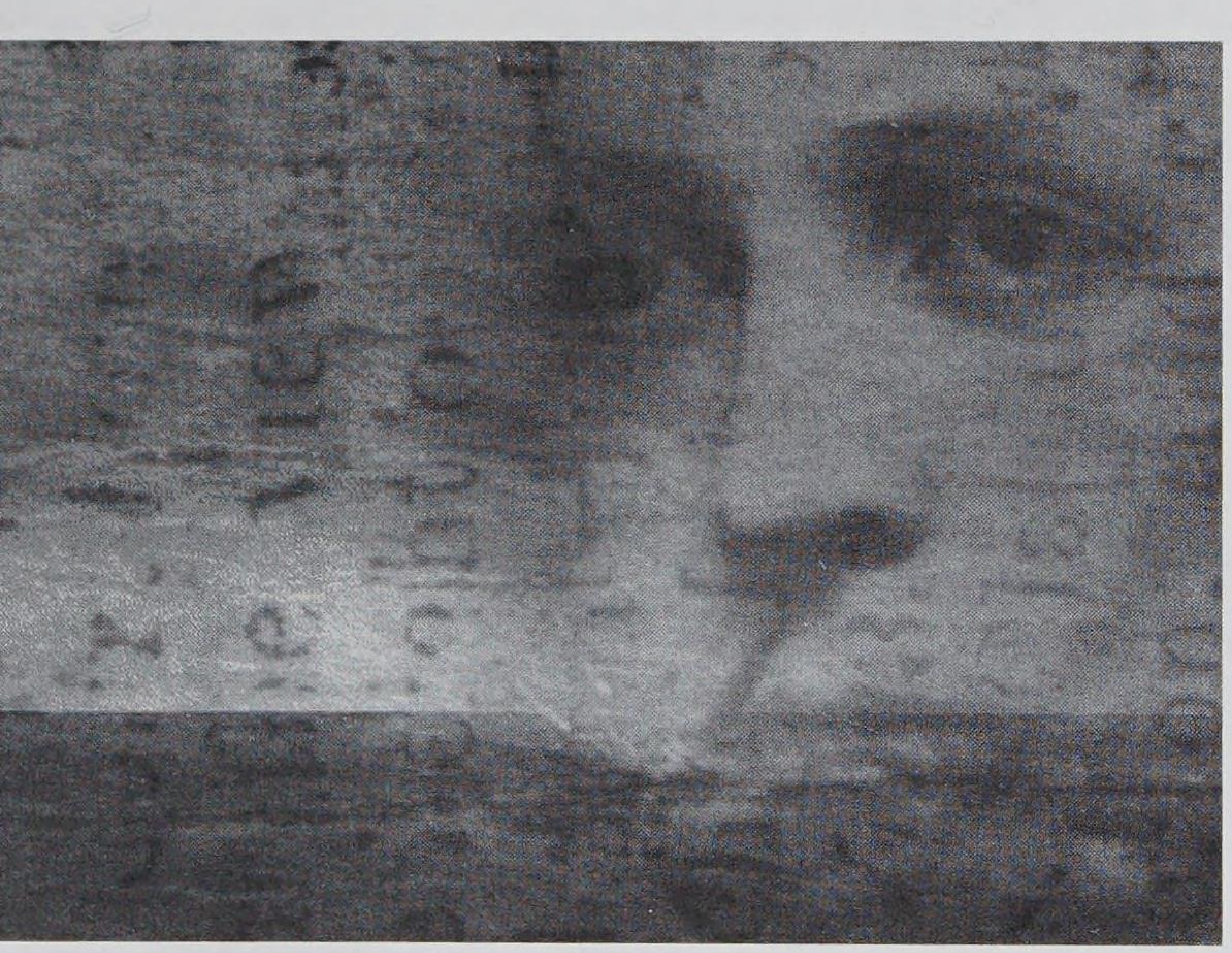
My head grew faint and reality fell from my grasp.

I felt alone, so alone, save for the murmuring voices cursing through the halls of Edwin's mansion. Or perhaps these voices were within my head, echoes of my own past misfortunes and misdeeds.

Drunken with dementia, I stumbled out of the conservatory and to the forbidden room off the upstairs hall, half of which had mysteriously fallen in the ocean some

years before. Air, fresh air. Yes, the brisk sea breeze would revive me. I entered the room and walked to the very edge where the ragged wooden planks of the floor meet the clouds. I stood there transfixed by the burnt flaxen sky, inhaling deeply, furthering my intoxication. My next actions are unexplainable, unbelievable to me now. Driven by an impulse that rose from the very depths of my soul, I stepped off the edge of the room—yes, simply stepped off—into the sky and out of this world.





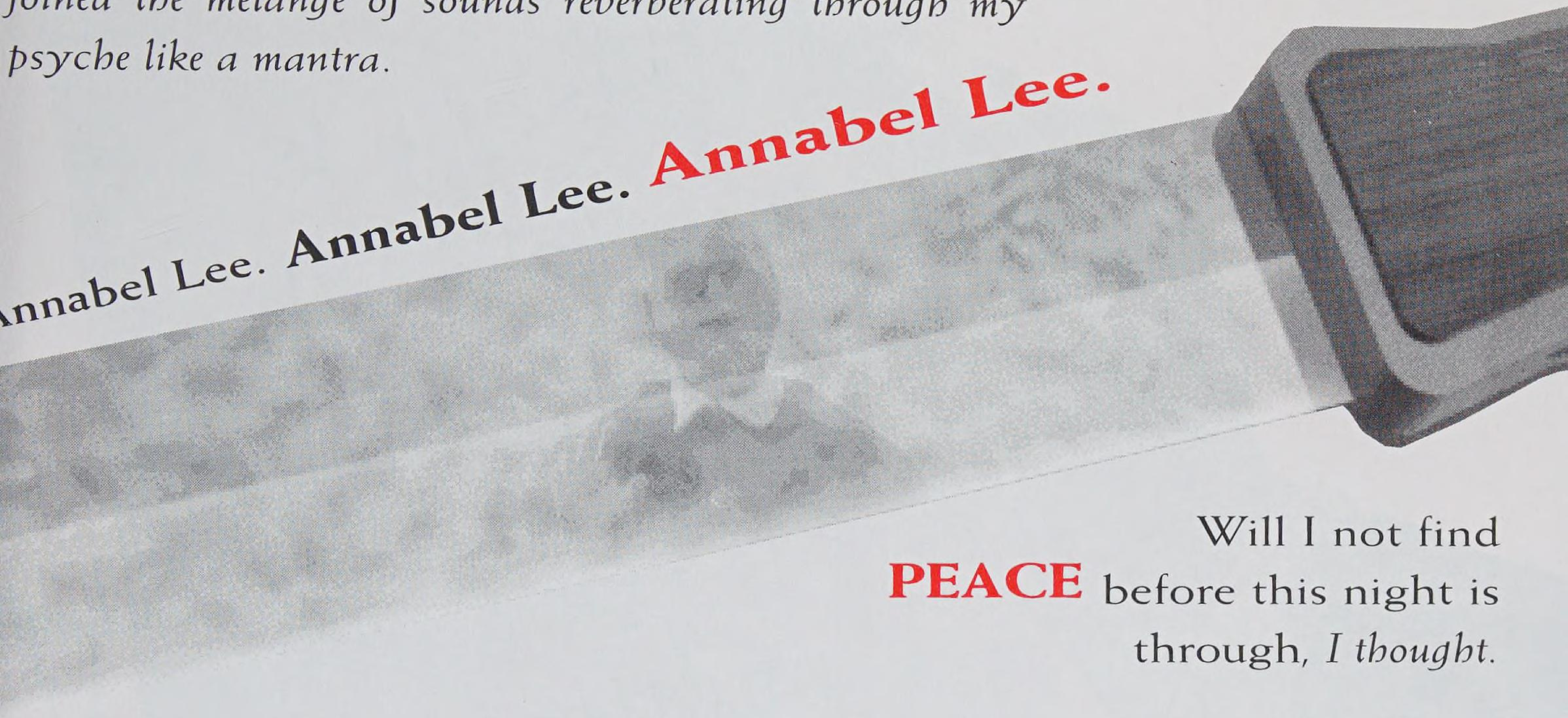
As I floated through that ethereal world for what seemed like an eternity, a tragedy played before my mind's eye. Bizarre images danced through my consciousness as though on a stage before me.

As I watched, captivated by the enigmatic performance, a powerful, almost sinister voice sounding much like Edwin spun the tragic tale of doomed lovers.

. . .

When the hallucinatory melodrama at long last released me from its grasp, I found myself perched at the edge of the room. Though my feet were planted firmly on the floor, the unworldly aura continued to engulf my soul. And the name Annabel Lee joined the mélange of sounds reverberating through my psyche like a mantra.

nnabel Lee. **Annabel Lee.** **Annabel Lee.**

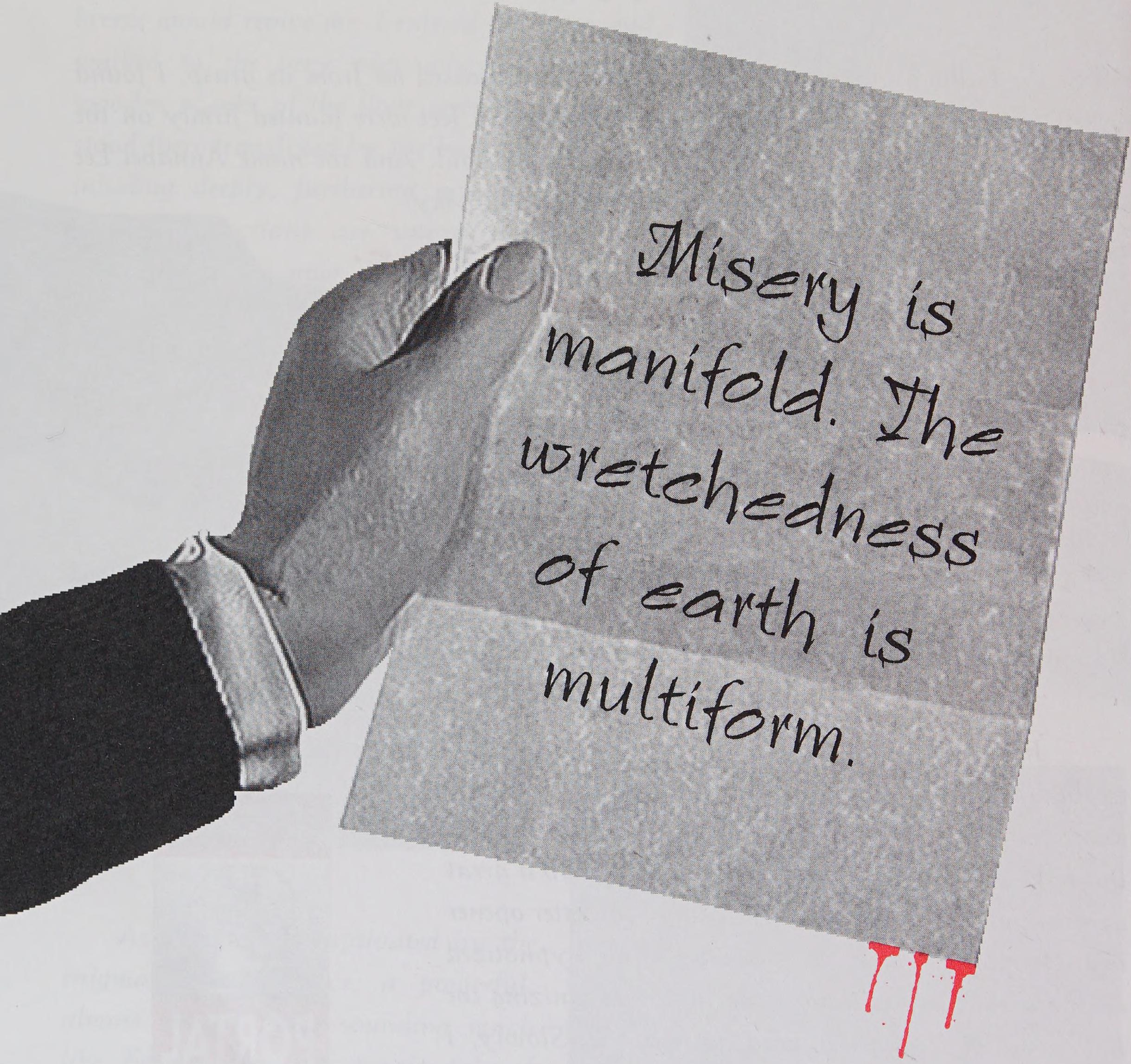


Will I not find **PEACE** before this night is through, *I thought.*

Immersed in this twilight of dementia, I stumbled to the library, searching . . . for what I did not then know. My body propelled itself to that room—and to the desk—as if of its own volition, or as though a great magnet pulled me there. My eye caught the letter opener laying upon the desk, its gleaming blade hypnotized me. I stared at my reflection therein not recognizing the hollow-faced stranger gazing back at me. Slowly, I ran my hand across the cool, metallic surface—and fell through time and space into another existence. . . .

Dream

PORTAL



Misery is manifold. The wretchedness of earth is multiform.

Chapter 6

Berenice

Egaeus

An Opulent Country Manor, 1800s

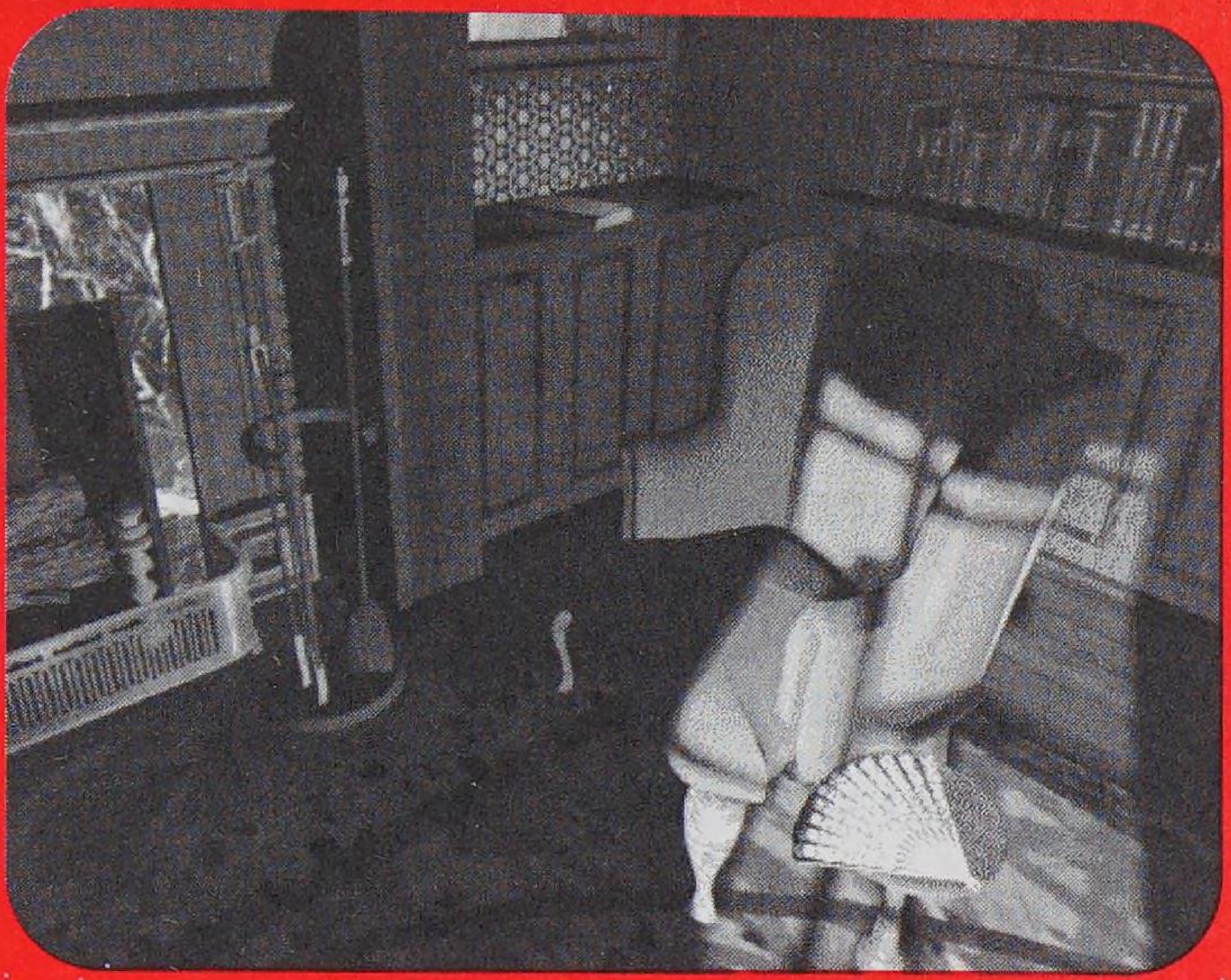
The great philosophers and literary masters of our time led me to believe that to be completely obsessed with one's passion was to create something of brilliance. So it was that I determined to endow upon the world my contribution—the fruit of my obsession—to be kept sacred by the generations that followed. Heeding the sage advice of my predecessors, I spent my timeless youth in the heart of my father's study, consumed for years by the prose I knew would secure my place in the world—sealing my ultimate salvation.

Despite being given to a morose and monastic nature, I became, in manhood, an accomplished traveler into the spiritual soul of mankind. I often spent days contemplating the shadows that fell through my windows, or the incessant flames lighting my hearth, or a single word that repeated itself within my head until its sheer meaning became a vision of its own. This passion of mine–a self-described disease I call *monomania*–utterly enveloped not only my body, but the entirety of my mind.

Wealth and stature, to me, were never as important as this visionary brilliance that was the essence of my lineage. It was because of my affliction that I found it difficult to explore matters of the heart, especially with regard to my dear cousin Berenice. We grew up together in my family home, she a sprite, vivacious young woman. However, in recent years, I have watched with increasing bitterness as she frequently falls into mysterious fits that disable the whole of her person–mind, body and soul. It is, at best, morally and physically repulsive to me.

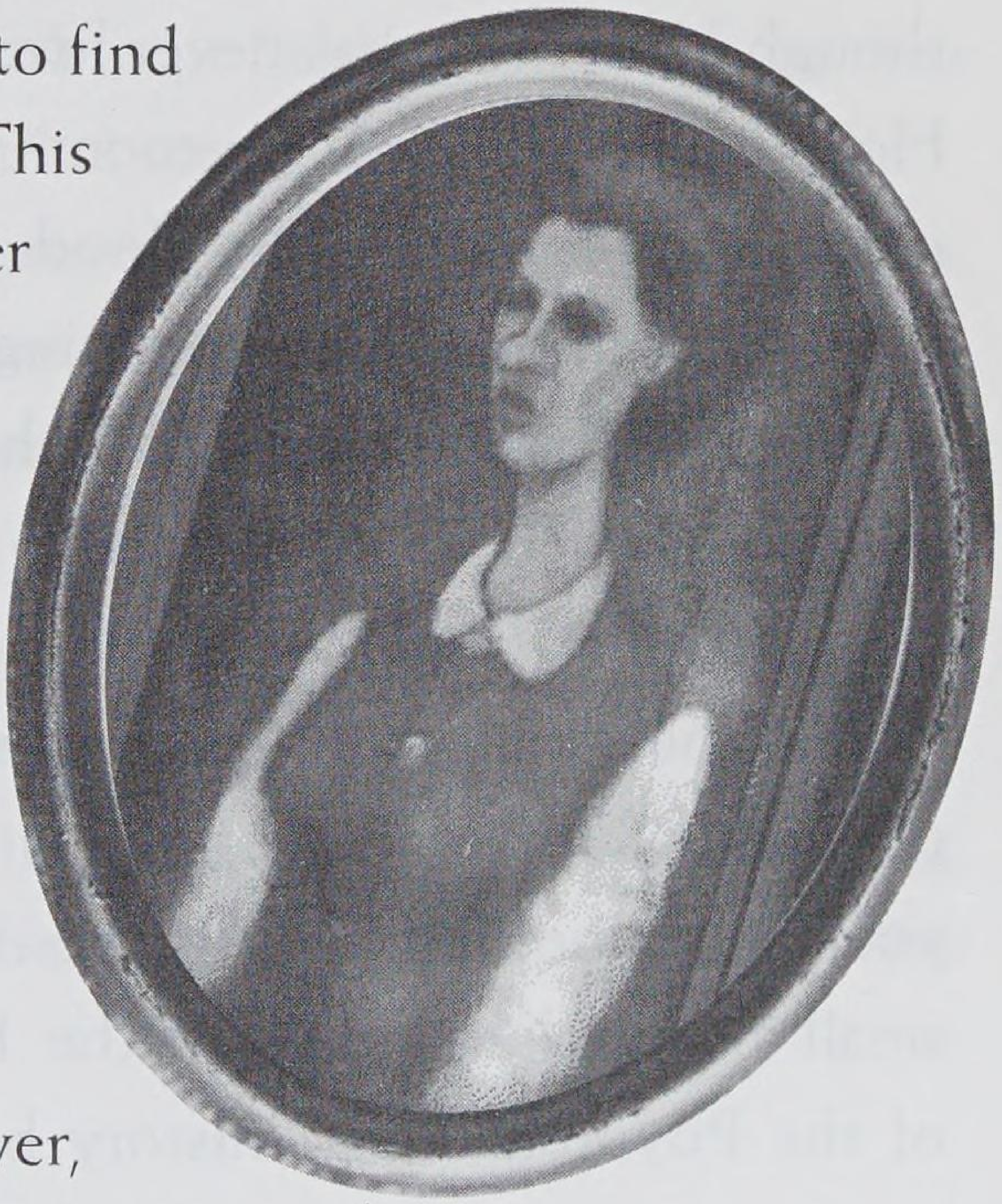
I have never loved Berenice, though she undoubtedly and unceasingly loves me. It is only through my visionary talents that I have come to recognize in her the singular quality that overwhelms my being to the very core.

It is her smile . . .
in all its perfection . . .
that wonderfully hideous little smile . . .



How many days have passed since I last left the comfort of these dark, solitary chambers? This letter opener has been the sole focus of my attention for hours, perhaps days. With pen in hand, I shift my focus toward addressing Dr. Reynolds.

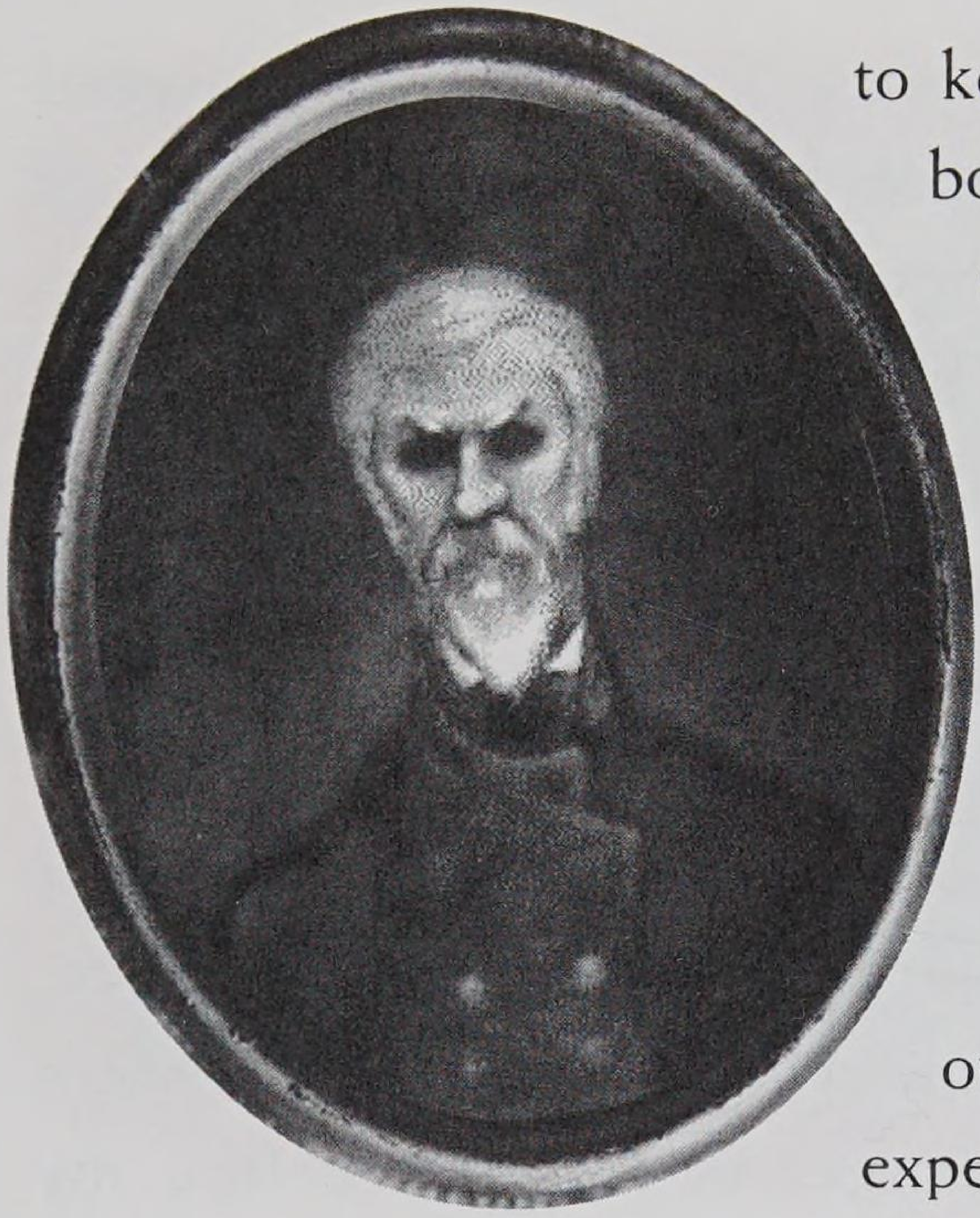
My impending thoughts burden me greatly of late, as Berenice, who has been put into my inept charge, deteriorates before my very eyes. I must ponder, very carefully, how to properly state this missive. Pacing will surely help clear my clouded, somewhat delusional mind.



To mother's overstuffed chair I am drawn, as a moth pulled toward a flame. It is an amazing act that enables man to find memory in the ordinary objects of his existence. This chair was mother's favorite, and running my hand over its velvety surface elicits visions of her gentle demeanor . . . her soothing voice . . . her painful demise. Mother, where are you? I must see you. What I would not give to once again caress her auburn hair, turned prematurely white from the same disease that now afflicts Berenice.

I must contend myself with stroking your portrait. Why did you leave me to this place, at this time?

Look, mother, your locket. I keep it in the desk drawer, near my heart. I've tried, mother, with much painstaking care,

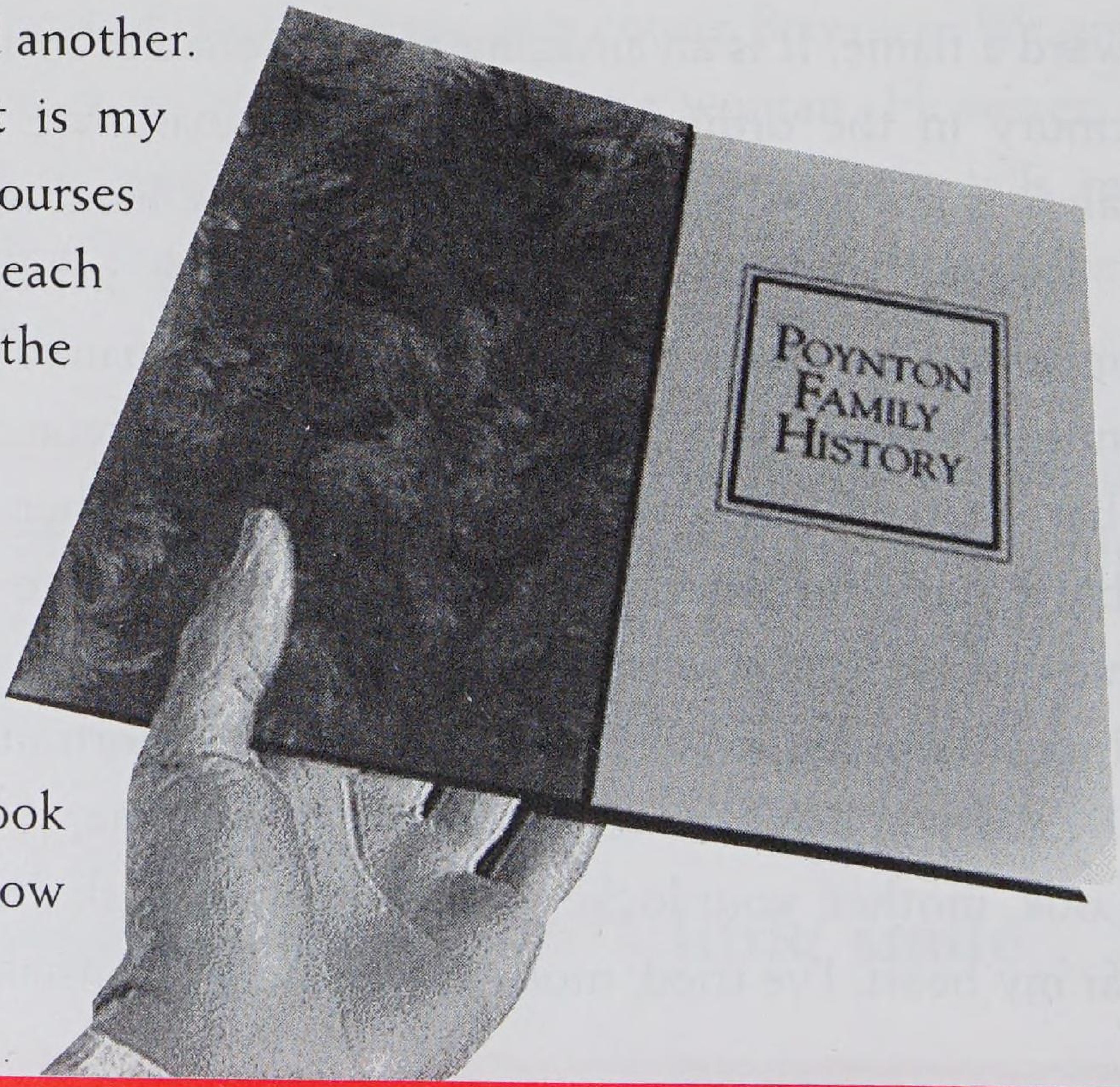


to keep my solemn oath, but time and Berenice's health both seem to slip through my fingers. I have not the strength nor the disposition to conserve both myself and Berenice. What shall I do? And what of grandfather's wishes?

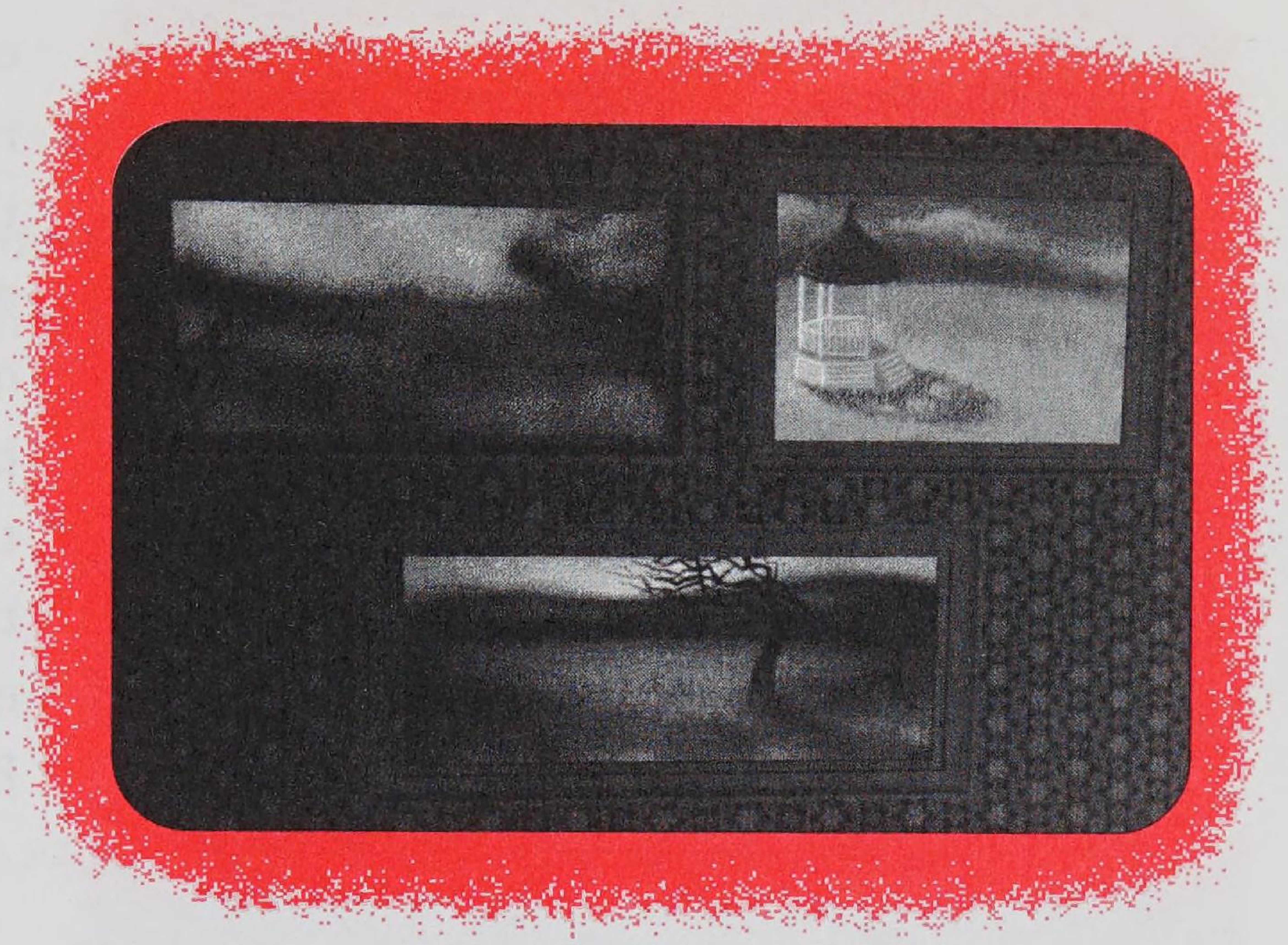
As I often have before, I move to stand before his portrait and seek his counsel. I pass my hand over the rough wool of his coat. Your sound advice, grandfather, gives me hope and guidance through the darkest of days. But why must I uphold the burden of our generations? How can I meet your strident expectations in my own pernicious condition?

The room suddenly grows cold, and I warm my hands over the burning embers of the fireplace.

I never felt a warm affection for Berenice, though I know she has never loved another. How could I leave this room? It is my entire world. My life's blood courses through each book, each painting, each slant of light blazing through the window.



With heavy heart, I tread to the portrait of Berenice, once so young, so beautiful. It is no small irony that I display the book of the Poynton family history below your portrait. It is, and always shall remain, a reminder of my familial duties–just as your presence in my home incessantly beats my obligations into my brain.



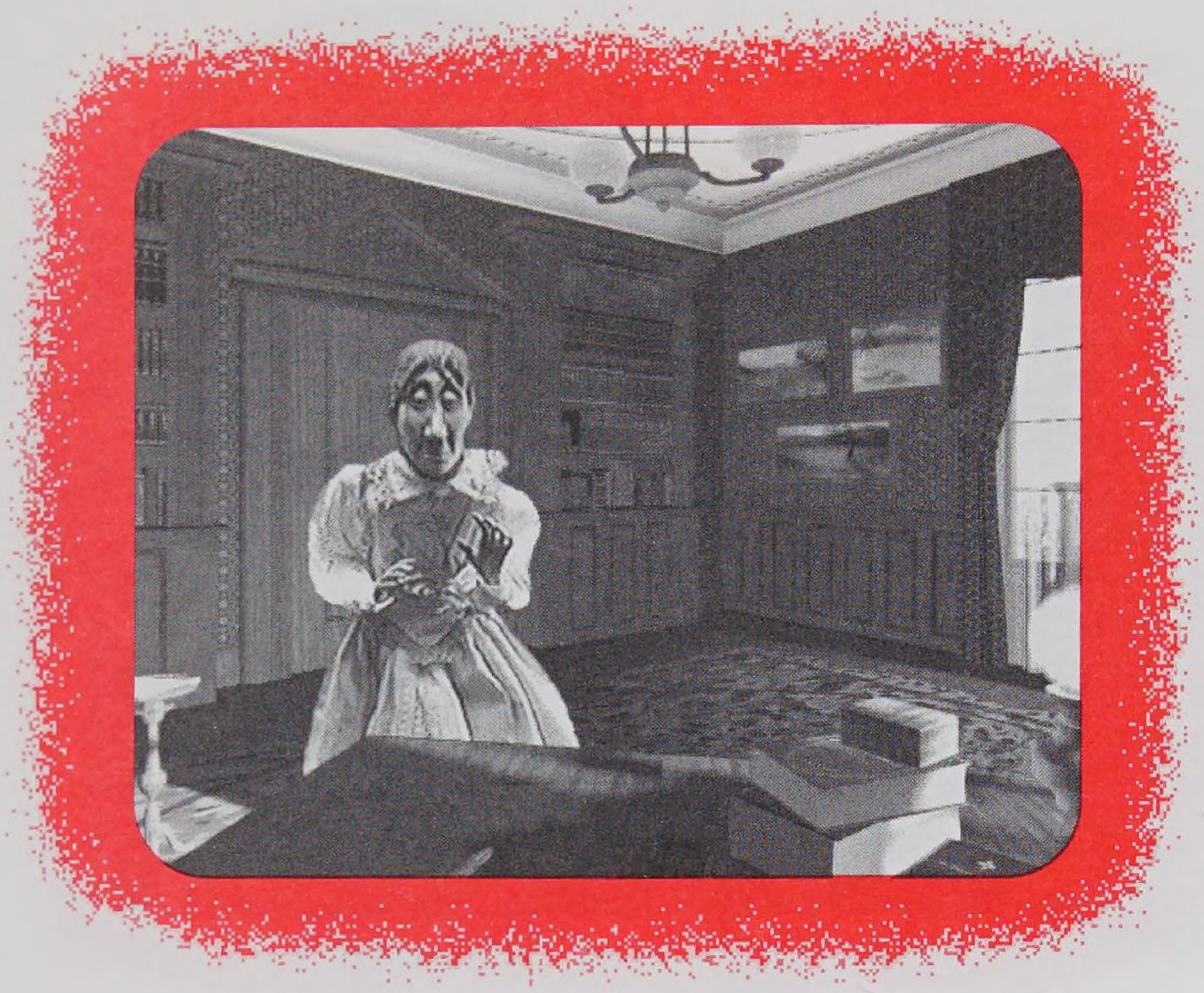
This book is so powerful that it keeps my attention to its simple binding for hours and days on end. I always pick up the book twice, so as to better understand the message it conveys. Repetitive motion eases my anxiety.

I grow morose. I must transport myself to a happier time, or I shall surely go mad. There, that portrait depicting the sunny pasture where we once strolled draws me near, brings me small comfort. I run my fingers over the windswept field and hear the familiar laugh of the once frolicsome Berenice. That happier time seems so long ago.

I move to the window and stare out at the peaceful grove beyond these chamber walls. I can't help but remember the youthful carefree existence of yesteryear.

Mother? Help me, mother. I return to the chair where you so often sat. I wish you sat there still. All I can do is run my hands over smooth surface of the chair, evoking your soothing image. How could such tragedy befall us, that you were taken from this world so soon? I caress Berenice's fan, evoking a vision of sheer loveliness.

The sunlight streams through the window, I bask in its warm glow . . . comprehending, through its absorption into my body, its reason for being. I must bond with its every fiber.



There, that's better. My constitution has been sufficiently restored so that I might complete this message to our family physician. Taking the pen in my quavering hand, I relay to him the concerns of my increasing affliction, the uncontrollable loss of time I suffer as a result of my obsessions. And what of poor Berenice. Can nothing be done?

A knock.

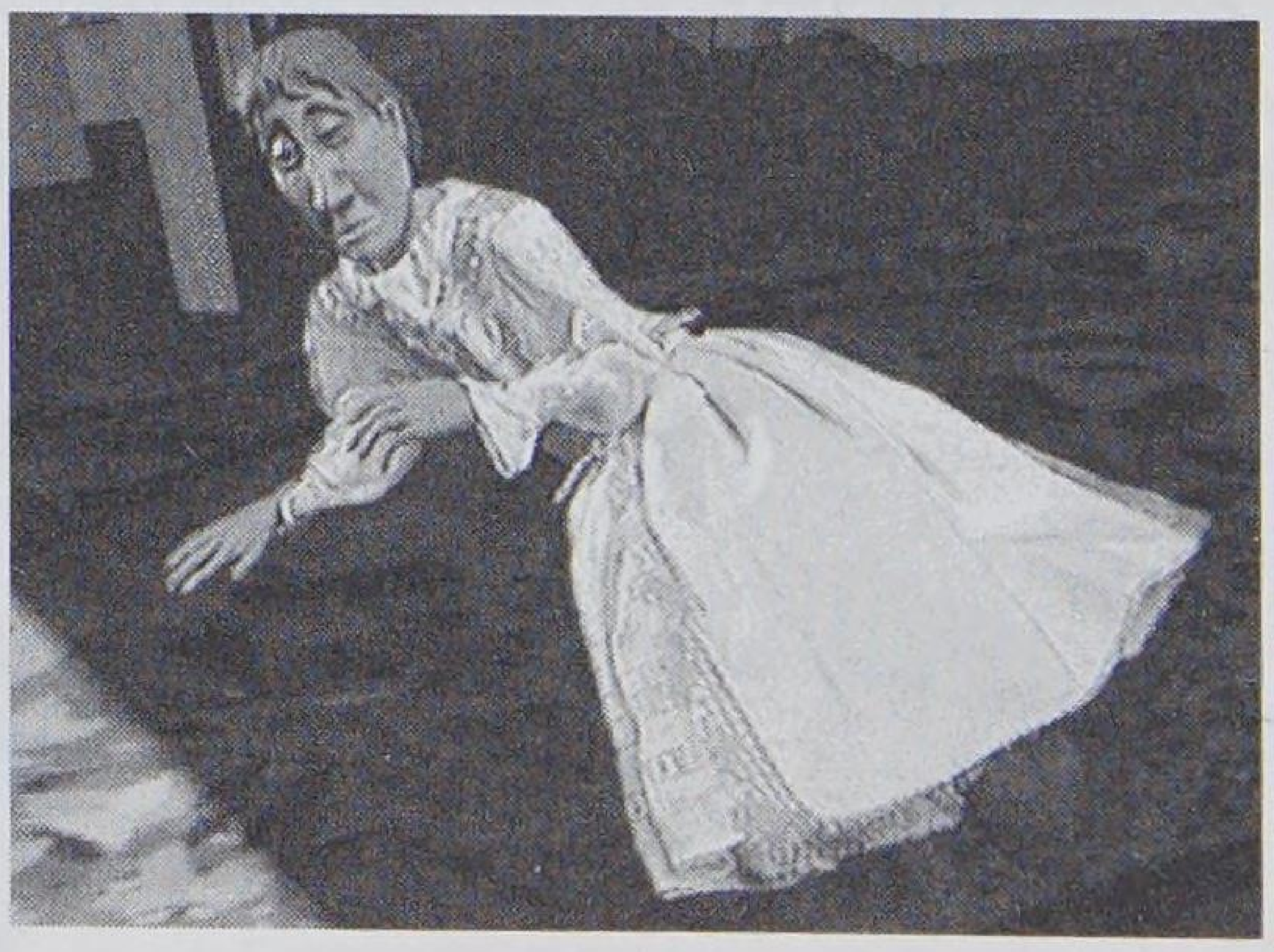
Was it a knock?

There it is again. I suppose I should bid them entrance.

It is Berenice. I see her there, but does she really exist? Multiple visions hover above her head. I reach out to stroke them, but blackness once again entombs me. I struggle to regain my senses, but cannot. Her eyes–there is no light in her eyes–they are lusterless. They are hideous . . . utterly mortifying.

There is but one way to end this madness–

I shall ask her to marry me.



Good God! She's had one of her spells. She's fallen into a bothersome heap upon the study floor. How long can she endure? How long must I endure? Help, somebody help!

. . .

There now. Alone again, at last.

Mother? Grandfather? Please come to me; I need your guidance. I have done a very foolish thing. Stare not at me with reproach from your gilded frame! I have never loved her, and those eyes . . . their brilliance replaced with an empty stare. Why has she cursed me with her undying love?

What of the time we sat under the tree on that fiery red eve? I held no affection for other than kinship, then, as now–and pity. The painting–a constant, reminder of my halcyon days. As I run my hands across that place and time, I take pleasure in the knowledge that my youth has been captured forever. I have never loved her, even in our happy youth. How can I look after so sickly a creature for whom I share no devotion? As I peer out the window I see only the past . . . and no future worth living.

This room grows small, claustrophobic. I move quickly about in a furrowed frenzy. Mother, if only you could sit in your chair one last time! I recall Berenice's youthful vigor as I hold her fan in my trembling hands. Mother? You are here. Aren't you?

No! Don't go. Don't leave me!

Once again I reach out to the compelling images of my youth. No more of what has been! To the window I turn. I must see the outside world . . . see it for once as it truly exists.

I move to the window by the desk and watch as day becomes night and day again. I have lost time. How could I have been so remiss to have asked her hand in marriage? An incredible dread paralyzes me.

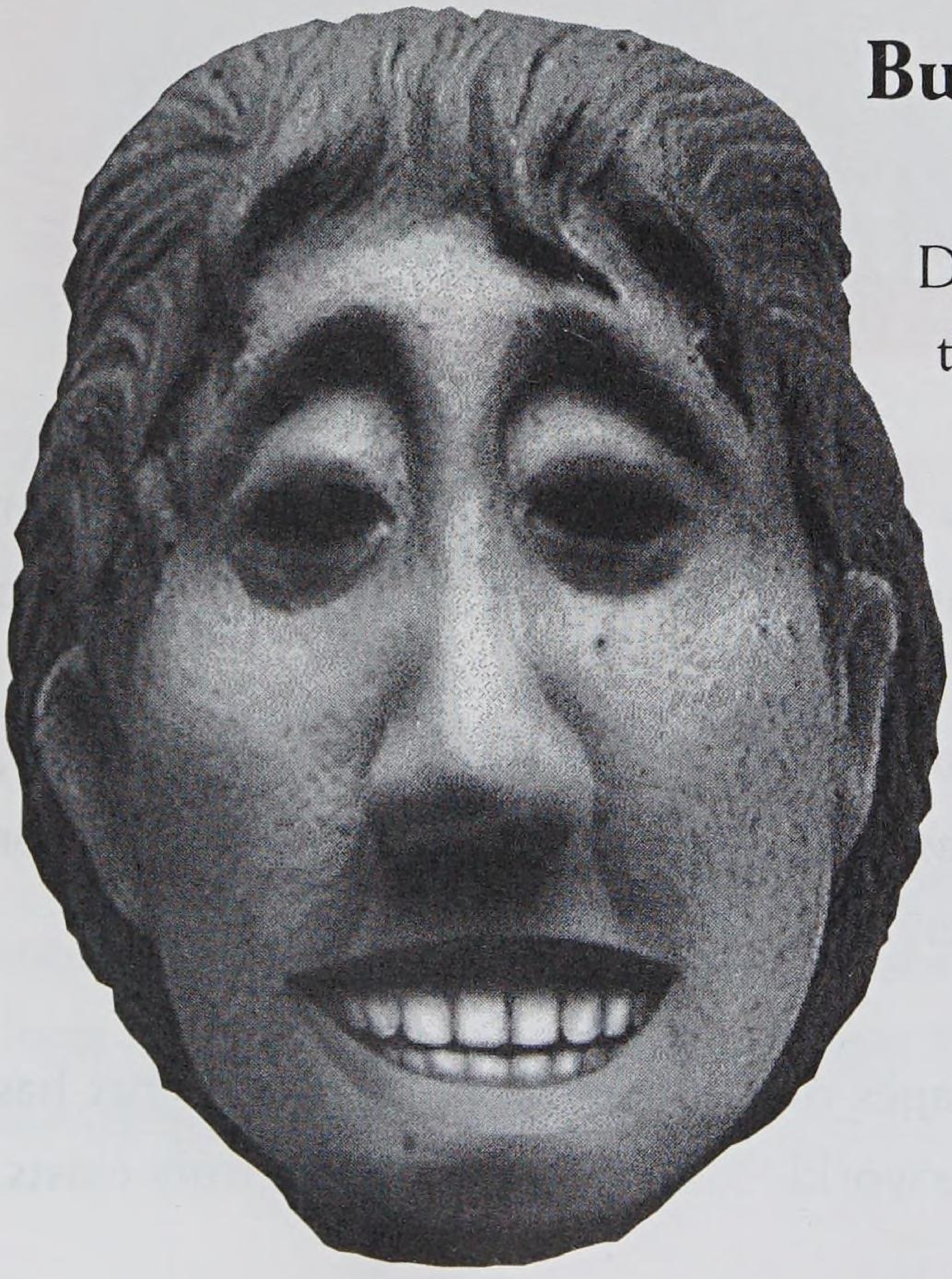
Mother–you have returned to your chair! How I so wish you could remain. I have only these dark walls and family remembrances to sustain my anguished vigil; it is all I know. To maintain my sanity, I continue to keep company with the portraits of my relations, to gaze at the embers burning below in my hearth, and to remember you, dear mother, as you were, poised in that glorious chair.

What's this? The fire has grown cold. Berenice?

Dear God, her certain demise draws near. Somehow, I know this to be true.

My restlessness grows unbearable.

A knock? Oh, Berenice. How offensive she now appears to me. So wan and pale with those lifeless eyes . . . so devoid of spirit, of light.



But wait . . .

Do my eyes deceive me? That smile . . . how has that glorious smile escaped me all these years? Those round, white teeth. Those splendid ivory gems. They are a beacon in the darkness of my chamber–the light at the end of the long dark tunnel that is my life.

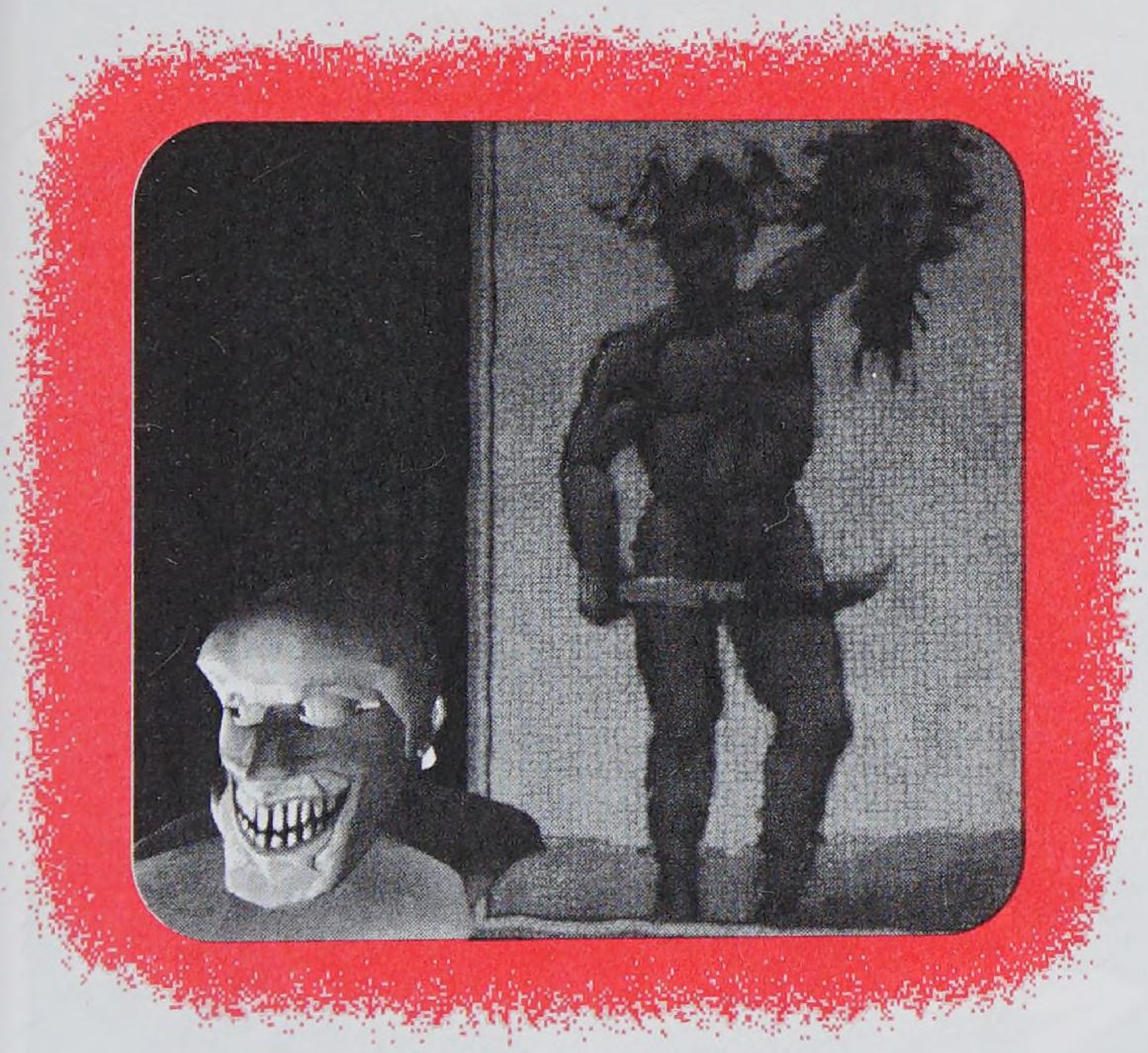
Those teeth. . . .

Mother? I have concocted a solution. Alas! It is true. I've studied your portrait all these years and until this arduous eve had not recognized your beautiful smile!

My papers–I review them to reassure the conviction of my talents. Teeth! Teeth!. Perhaps the most blindly perfect thing I have yet envisioned!. Those teeth . . . those incandescent pearls . . . so utterly perfect.

And grandfather! What a truly wonderful smile you have! Much better than the tiresome grimace engraved upon my memory. Indeed, to what a superior lineage I belong.

More, I want more! Insidious smirks abound! A smile is worth a thousand words–millions! And what of Plato, there perched on his marble pillar? Oh to run my fingers across your chisled grin. Yes. Oh yes! His teeth are, as those of Berenice . . . so round–in perfect alignment. Medusa! You wicked little wench. I knew a devious smile grew inside that singular head of yours.



The fan . . . where is Berenice's fan? Ah yes. Music to my longing ears–a thirty-two piece band! I am delirious with happiness. How could this have eluded me all these years? Even in my most lucid states, of this I could never have dreamed. Truly, I am not obsessed. This is not merely one of my spells–it is my salvation! Dear God–at long last–my salvation!

In delirious joy, I pace and ponder, savoring the knowledge that, at long last, I have discovered how to secure my rightful place among the great minds of our time.

What's this? Cries outside the door. I must open the door. Speak now or forever hold your peace, woman! Berenice? No more?

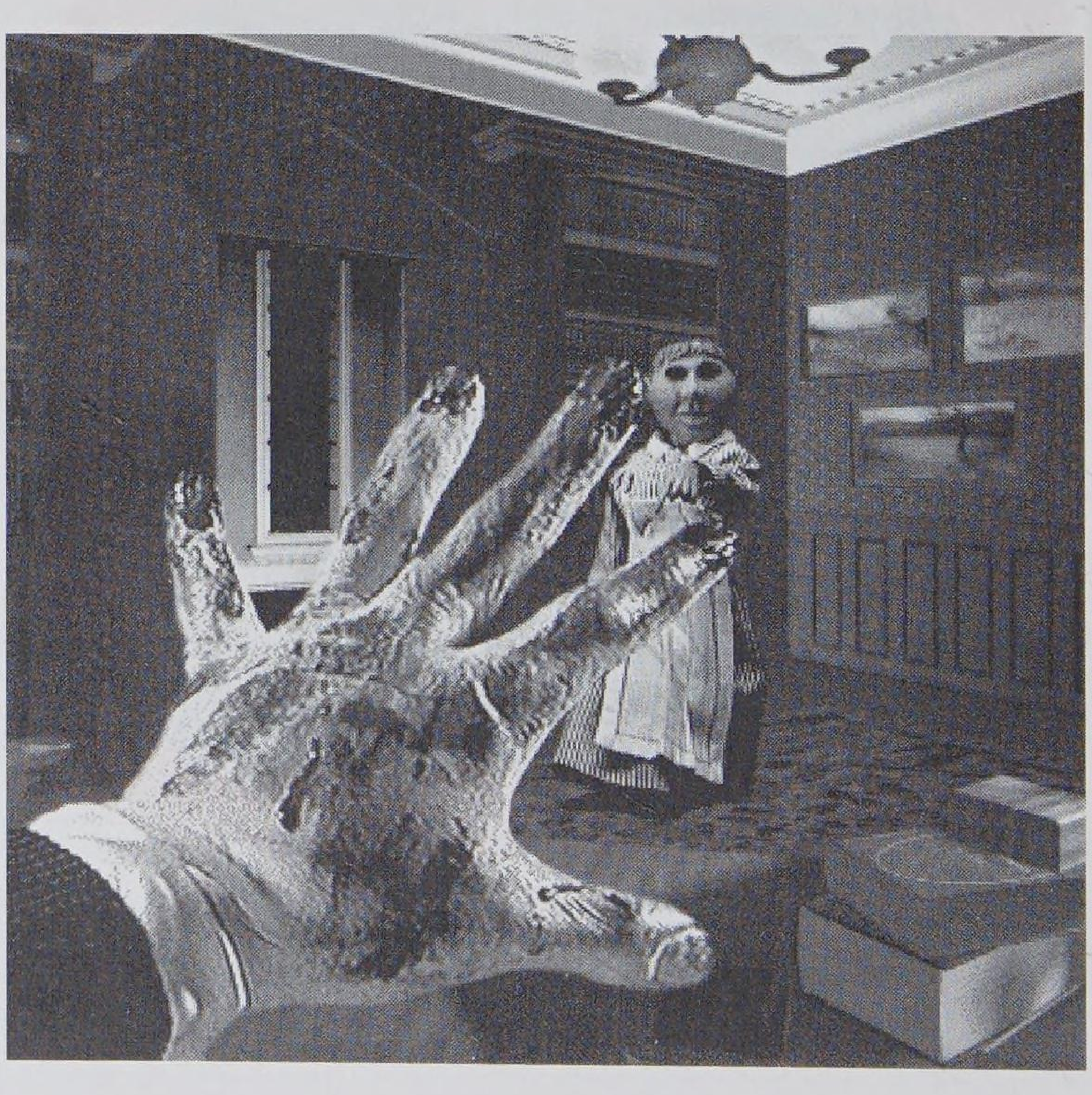
A somber darkness engulfs the cavern of my study. As always, I find peace in the bowels of literature. The book on my desk provides the solace I seek. Yes, comfort lies in the grave of my beloved. This, I have already surmised. I turn to one of my other books to further my resolve.

A knock? Can no soul leave me alone to my misery? Berenice? Her grave disinterred? How can that be–why? Confusion overtakes me. . . .

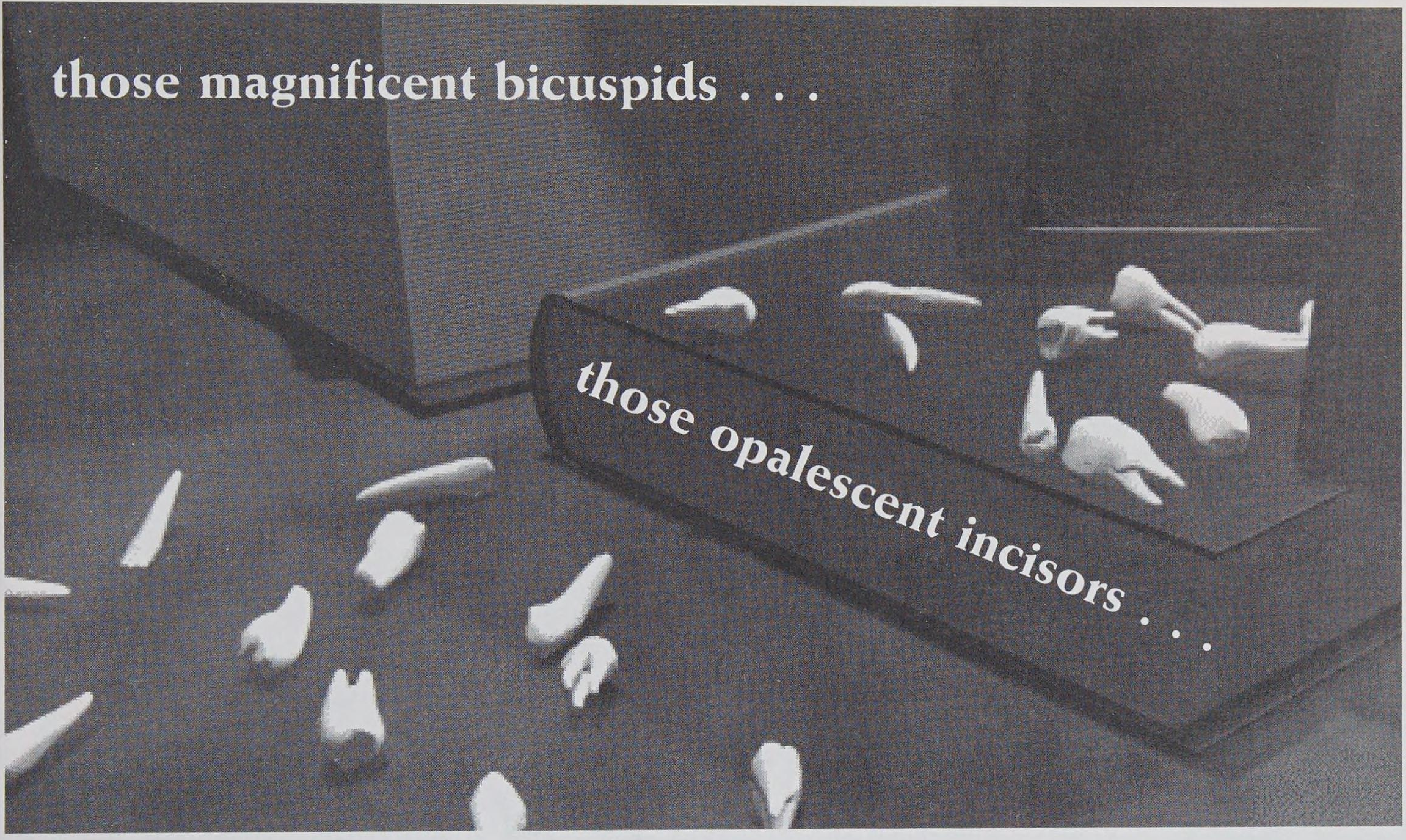
She lives?

Berenice, alive? How can this be? What kind of maniacal demon would . . . What is this? Blood covers my hands, back and front. But I know nothing of . . .

What? Look to the fireplace? A shovel? What villain could conceive such a demented scheme? From whose body does this blood flow . . . and why does it cover me?



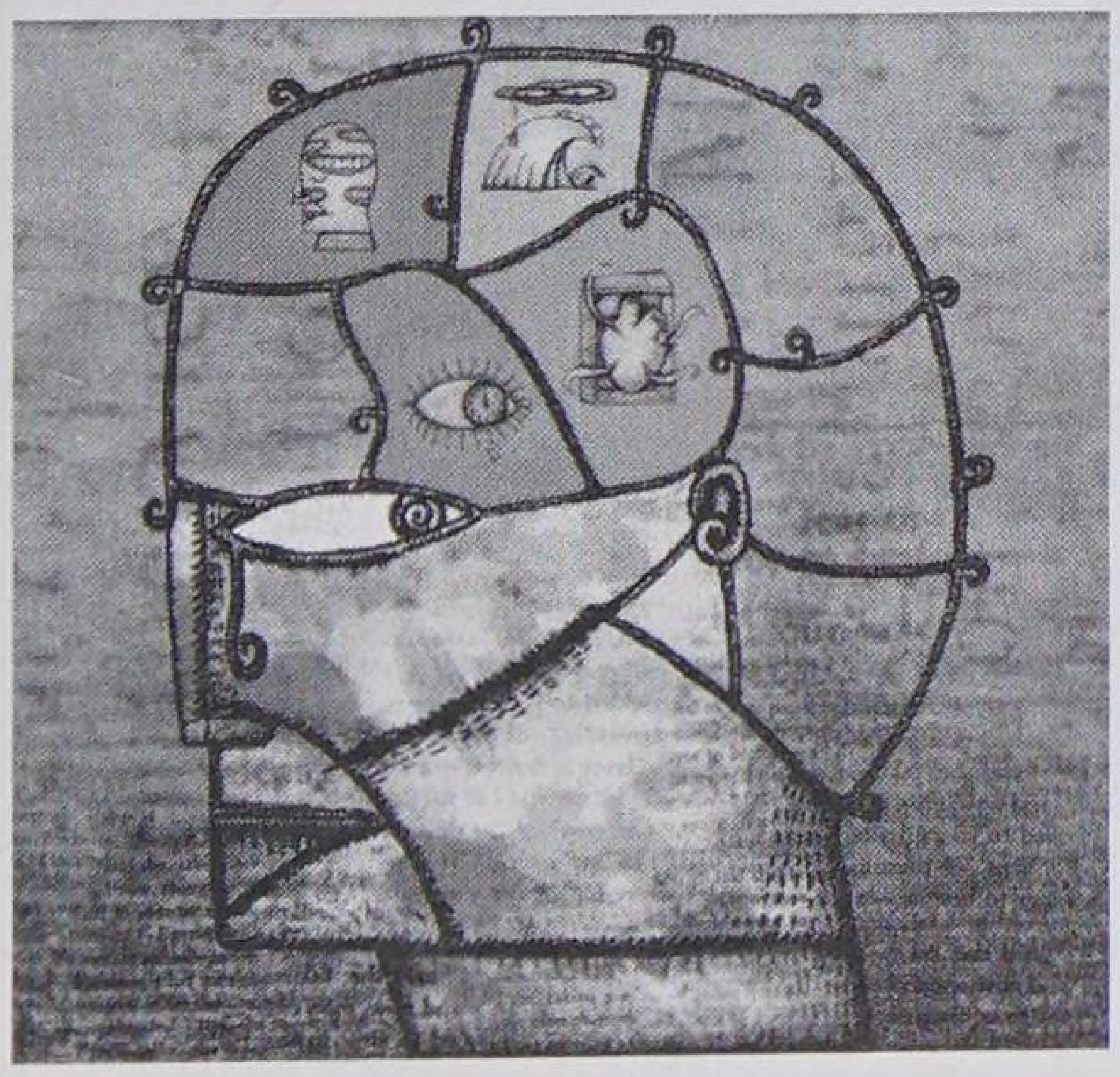
The box . . . yes . . . the box on my desk. Therein rests the answer to my deliverance. Yes, I remember now . . . Excitedly, I grasp the innocuous receptacle . . .

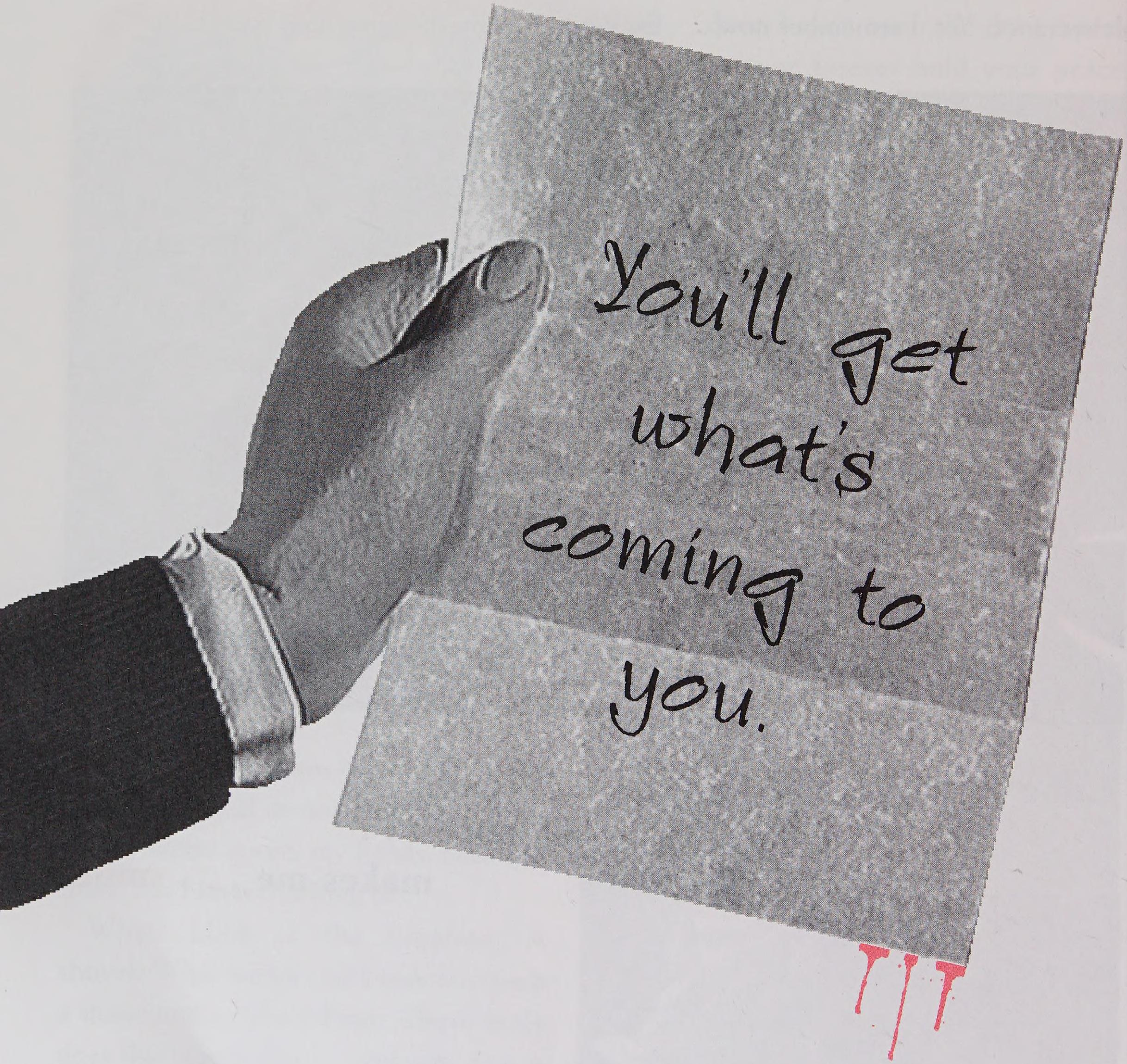

those magnificent bicuspids . . .
those opalescent incisors . . .

come tumbling down . . .

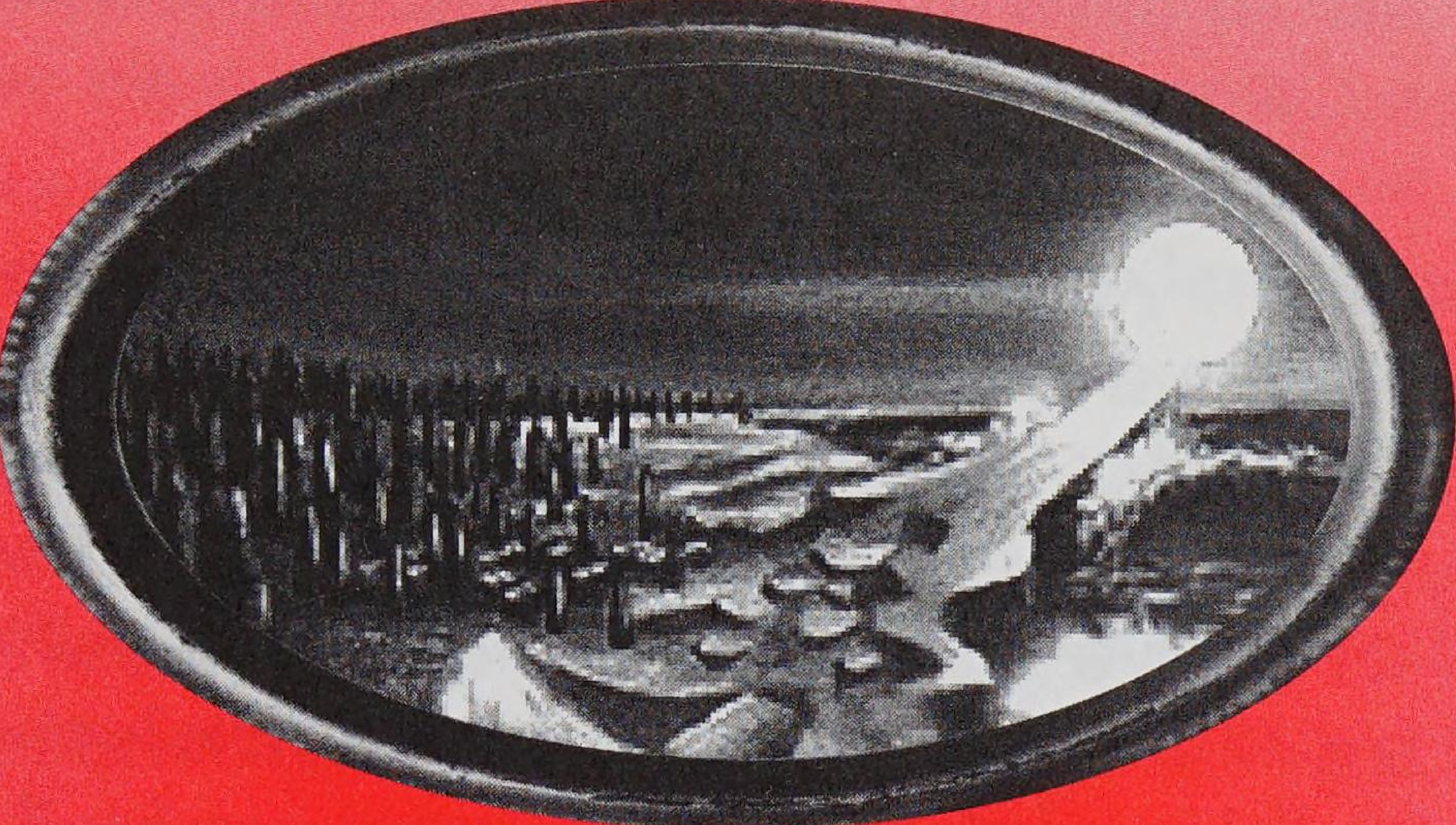
and their brilliance . . .

makes me . . . smile.




You'll get what's coming to you.

Chapter 7



Malevolence: Day Four

October 11, 1872

My terrifying dream of the night before conjures up an image of a hideous hermit. A man of mere shadow, gloomy and introspective, he was given to a self-indulgent insanity. His youth was whittled away in the pages of endless literary endeavors, those which ultimately led to his bookish manhood. He and his cousin grew up together in paternal halls, so different in mind, body and soul. A single thread of love spun around their mired existence. A love I've never known.

That which intrigues us carries us to intricate levels of attachment. If eyes are the window to the soul, then surely the smile is the entrance to the mind. This hermit understood that, but how could I possibly know this?

The increasingly unreal events and terrifying nightmares occupying me these past few days have become so convoluted and horrific, I no longer know where reality begins and ends. Then today, merciful heaven, today the most dreadful of tragedies has befallen this household. Wait, I must back up; I am getting ahead of myself. In order to unravel the calamity unfolding within this mansion and my own mind, I must reconstruct here all that I recall of this day's events, from beginning to invidious end. I harbor a dreadful fear that, one day, this journal may be all that is left to tell these events.

I awoke this morning after a frightful night of what I can only describe as an out-of-body journey in which I swapped souls with a creature I do not know, nor care to know. Yet, I suspect he lives within each of us. To say I "awoke" is a misnomer, for I have no recollection of having slept. Rather, I regained my senses, such as they now are, standing idly in the library, feeling extremely out of sorts. My malady seems only to worsen with each passing day. The pain in my head has become more severe and ever present, and I cannot for the soul of me determine its origin. A sense of foreboding and futility has served only to increase my agitation. I am weighted with the feeling that I must do something to *thwart certain, yet unnamed, disaster. I realize now my naivete' in thinking myself or any mere human capable of such an enormous undertaking—akin to catching a waterfall with my bare hands.*

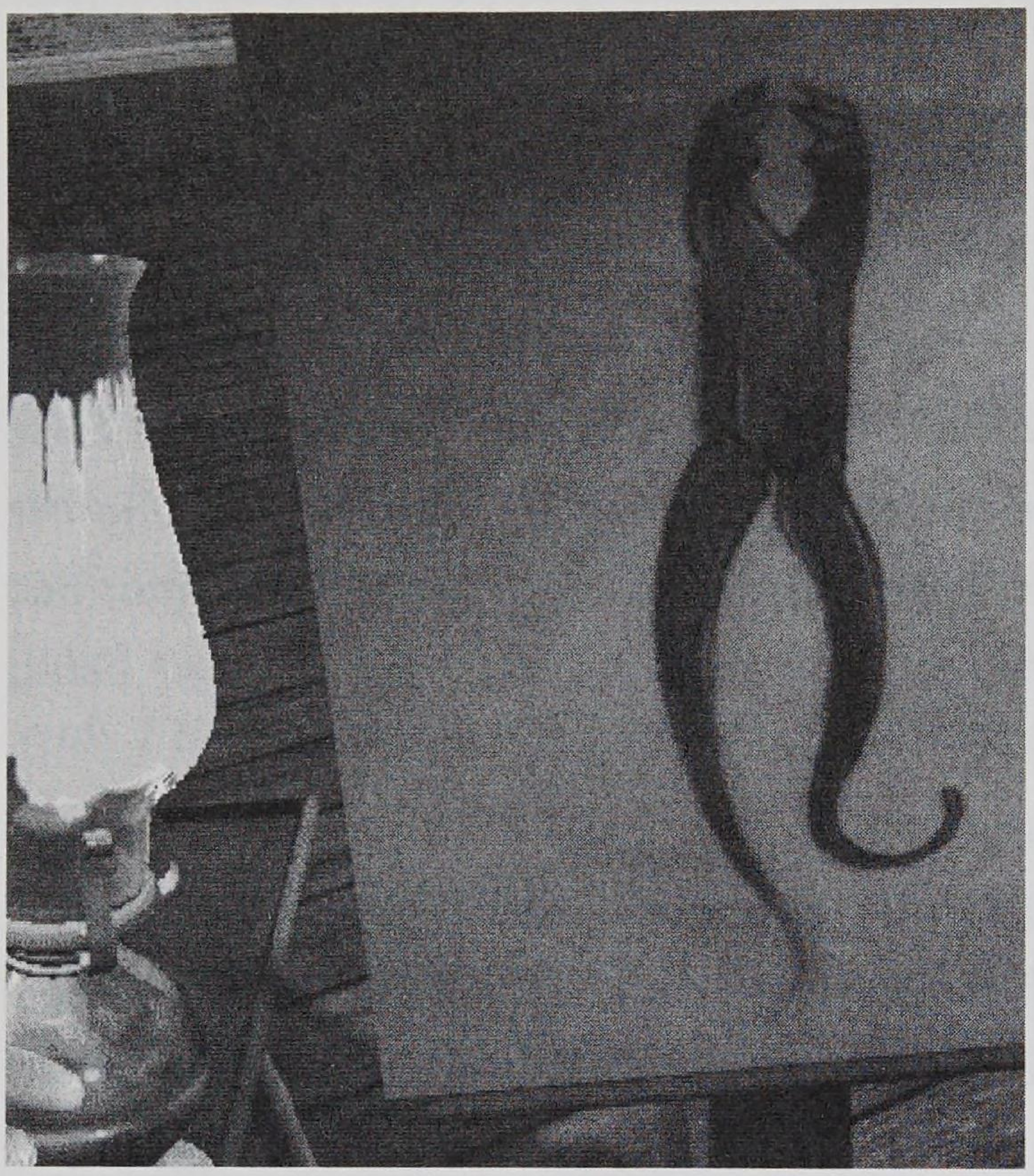
My first order of the day was to go to inquire into my brother Henry's emotional condition. I found him in the guest room, forlorn and dejected as a newly orphaned child. I offered him what little succor I felt able. I thought better of disclosing that Elise had, indeed, penned a communiqué to him, fearing that to do so would only ignite Edwin's wrath. The additional furor might jeopardize not only Henry's position, but Elise's compromised health, as well. No, it was best to remain mum for the time being and allow everyone's nerves time to settle.

As has become my custom during my stay at Edwin's estate, I then sauntered down to the cellar for a morning chat with Ambers. Not surprisingly, he was as disagreeable as ever, guarding the cellar as if it held rich treasures or dark secrets. The man's obtuse nature has begun to chafe me. I suspect that behind his stoic facade of loyalty lives a diabolical mind intent on harm.

As the day wore on, I became more uncertain of my decision to withhold Elise's memorandum to Henry. I paced the house trying to rationalize my fear of Edwin's retribution. Yes, he forbade me to assist in their communications. Yes, Elise is his charge and only in her fifteenth summer. And yes, this is his home. But what harm can be done by a simple letter between devoted cousins? Yet, I dreaded causing more harm than good by provoking Edwin, who, after all, has only her best interests at heart.

These conflicting thoughts drove me once again to the guest room, where Henry continued to languish in his misery. I offered the small consolation of my empathy and my assurance that all would resolve itself in the end. As I looked upon his crestfallen face, the shame of my betrayal nagged at the back of my mind. Still, I kept silent and stole out of the room, leaving my poor brother to his tribulation.

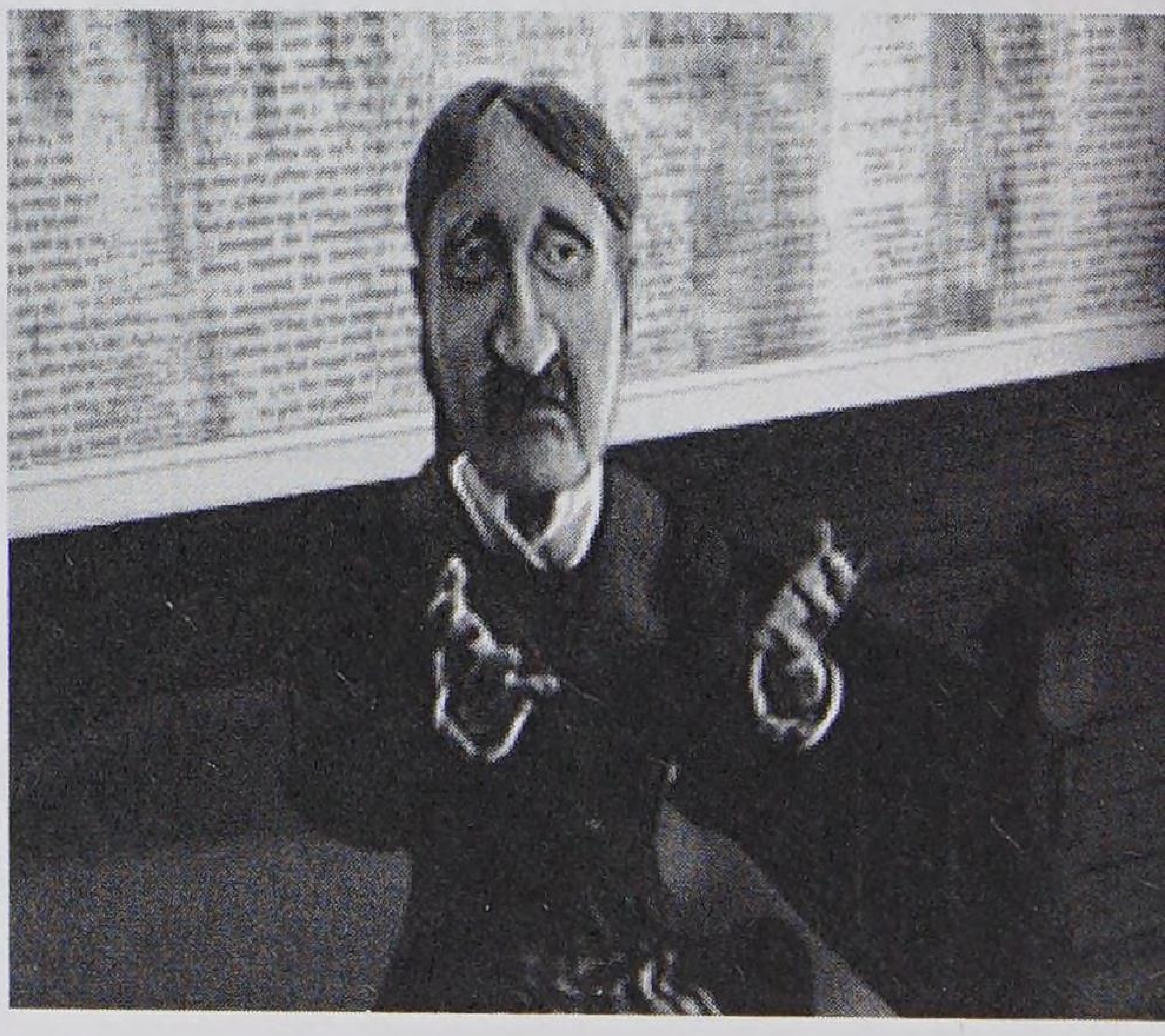
I wandered down to the studio hoping to find Edwin. He was not there, nor in the library. I next went to the gallery, which served as a grand Dining Room during the



illustrious days of this mansion's history, before the death of Edwin's mother. Now it is empty, save for a few of Edwin's paintings hanging there. As I entered the gallery, I noticed that a painting had been recently hung. I approached this painting and stared in disbelief, a sense of deja vu *overpowering my senses! How can this be? How in the devil's name could the dreamscapes inhabiting my mind become the object of Edwin's paintings? Are these, in fact, nightmares, stories from the past I've heard but do not consciously remember? Or has my cousin become a soothsayer, a mind voyeur, stealing my thoughts as I sleep?*

I immediately went to Henry's room, intending to discuss my concerns about Edwin's mental capacities—and incapacities, as it were. I opened the door and rushed in, but his solemn figure and plaintive query stopped me dead in my tracks. Enough!

With no further ado, I marched to the conservatory. I looked about, wondering what had become of Elise's letter in yesterday's confusion. I fretted that Edwin had already found it. Frantically, I raced to the piano, and thank God, there was the letter. I grabbed Elise's note from the piano, where I had left it yesterday just before Elise fell ill.



I raced back to the guest room with the letter in hand. Once inside the room, I gave the letter to Henry. He read the letter quickly, hungrily. I cannot adequately describe the look of relief mixed with anxious concern that spread across his face, which seems to have grown older than its years within these few days. As I turned to leave, his pleading voice gave me cause to turn back and listen to his disparaging plea for my assistance, for Elise's sake more so than his own. In that moment, I was touched by my brother's genuine fondness and concern for the lovely Elise. I realized he had, at long last, become a man.

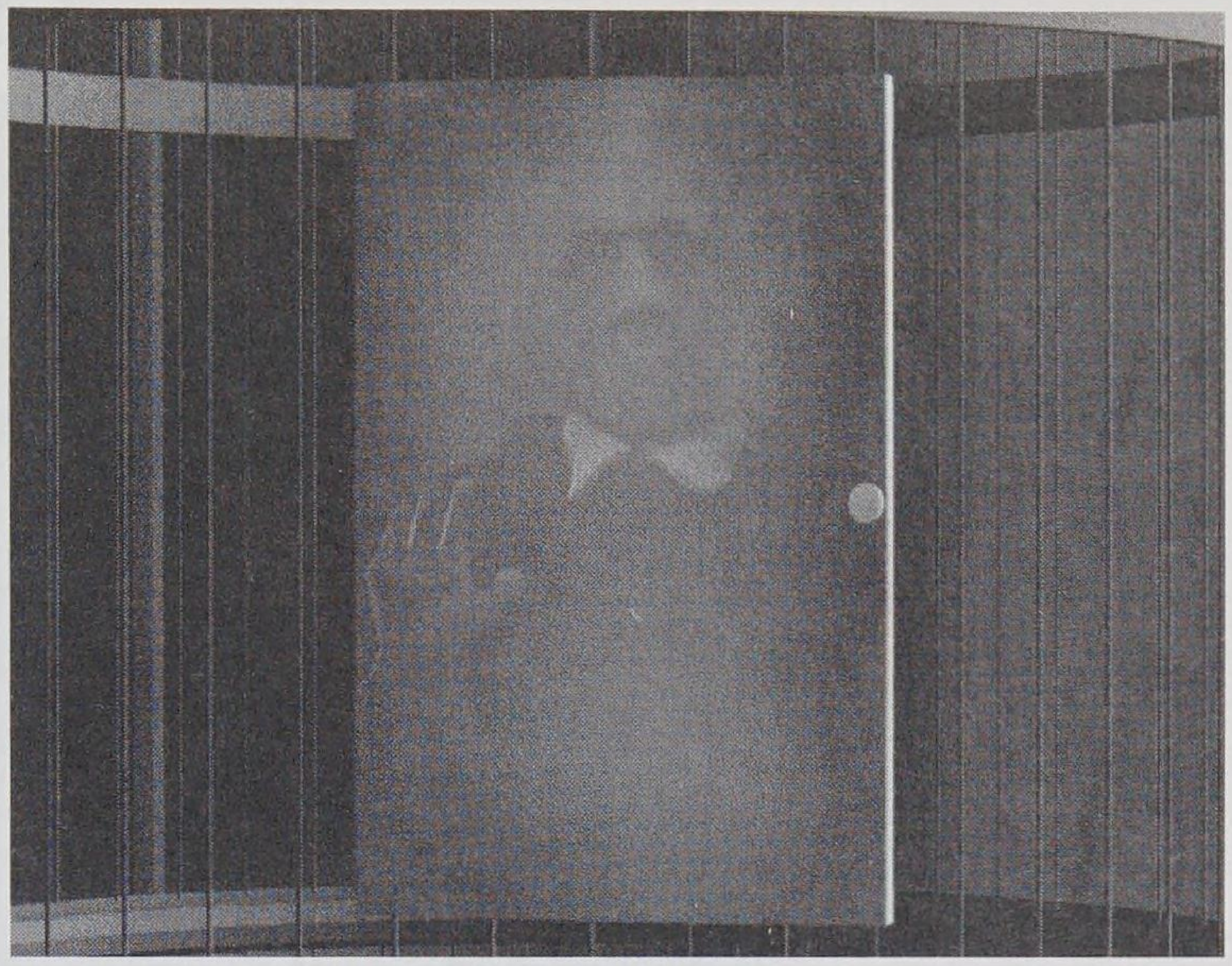
Our conversation was abruptly interrupted by a rude grunt behind me. I turned to face Ambers standing impassively in the doorway. Bluntly, the stoic messenger delivered his announcement of doom—with nary a quiver of voice nor a blink of his dark eye, least of all a tear.

Quickly, I crossed to Elise's room, Henry on my heels. I *opened the door upon a most grievous and repentant Edwin. My heart went out to the man, despite his irrational ravings of late. He did so dote on Elise, as if she were his daughter . . . or more. As I listened to his bereavement, it occurred to me that his devotion to her crossed material boundaries, as though she were an angel placed upon this earth to ensure his salvation. In solidarity with his misery, I stroked his bereaved shoulders.*

Edwin then turned to me and, to my surprise, admonished me to forevermore keep my silence. Even in his grief, the man's vengeance hath no end. Henry appealed to Edwin for compassion and reason, imploring only to pay homage to our beloved cousin Elise. At first Edwin flatly rejected his request but abruptly changed his mind. In fact, Edwin implored me to go fetch the lantern so that Henry might have light as he sat vigil with Elise through the night.

As I walked downstairs and into the studio, my sorrow lightened ever so slightly with the thought that some good might come of this tragedy insofar as it rejoins the familial bond between Edwin and Henry. I went to the front of the easel to retrieve the lantern and gasped at the still-wet painting standing there. To think that Edwin created this while Elise lay dying! I shuddered at the audacity of his compulsion. I quickly grabbed the lantern from the table and returned with it to Elise's room.

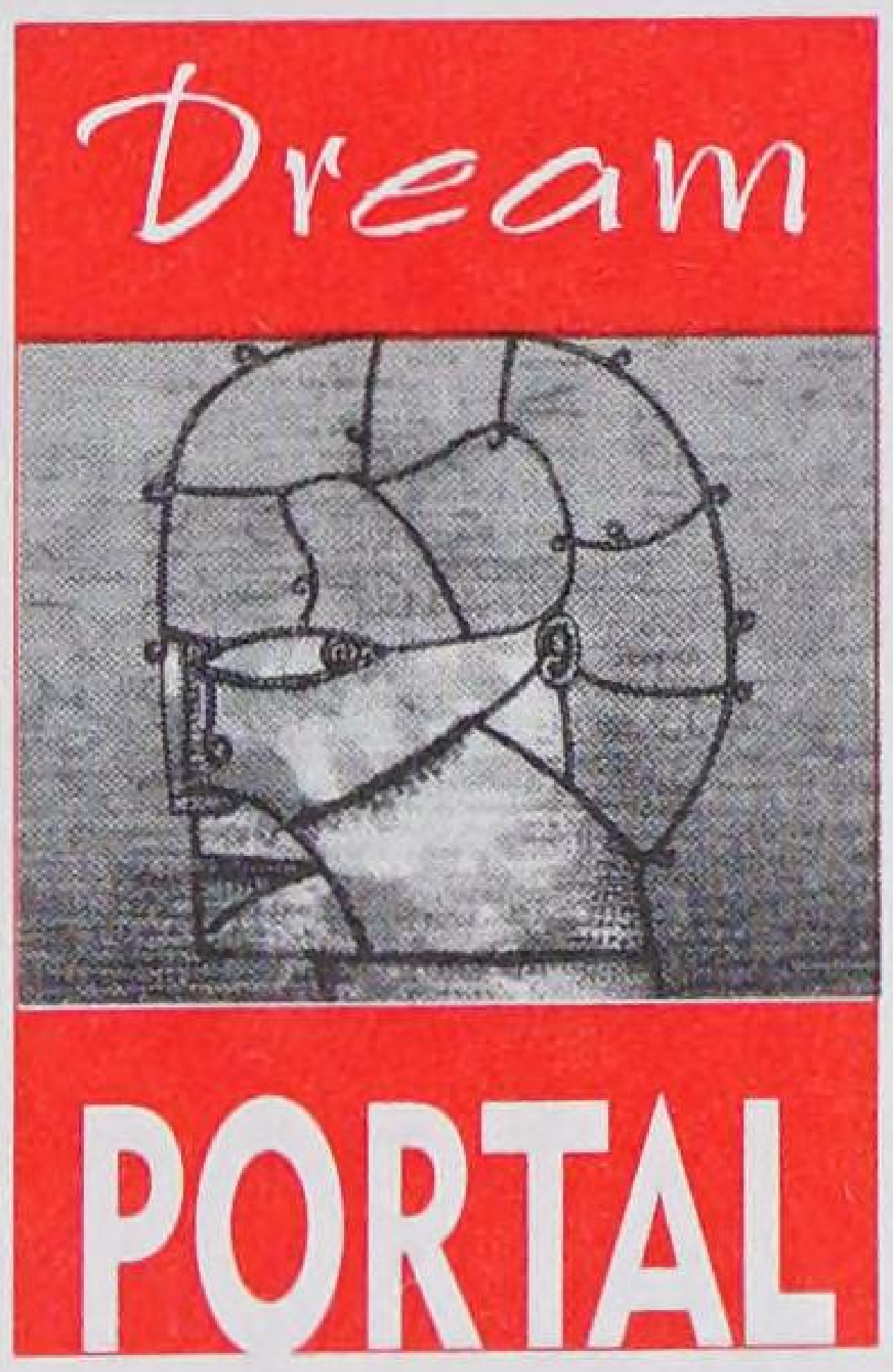
Upon entering Elise's still room I was struck first by Henry's despairing bulk, then by Edwin's oddly calm and collected demeanor. As instructed, I took the lantern to the table and left it there. Then we left Henry to wait alone with his departed beloved until the dawn, Edwin shutting the door tightly behind us.

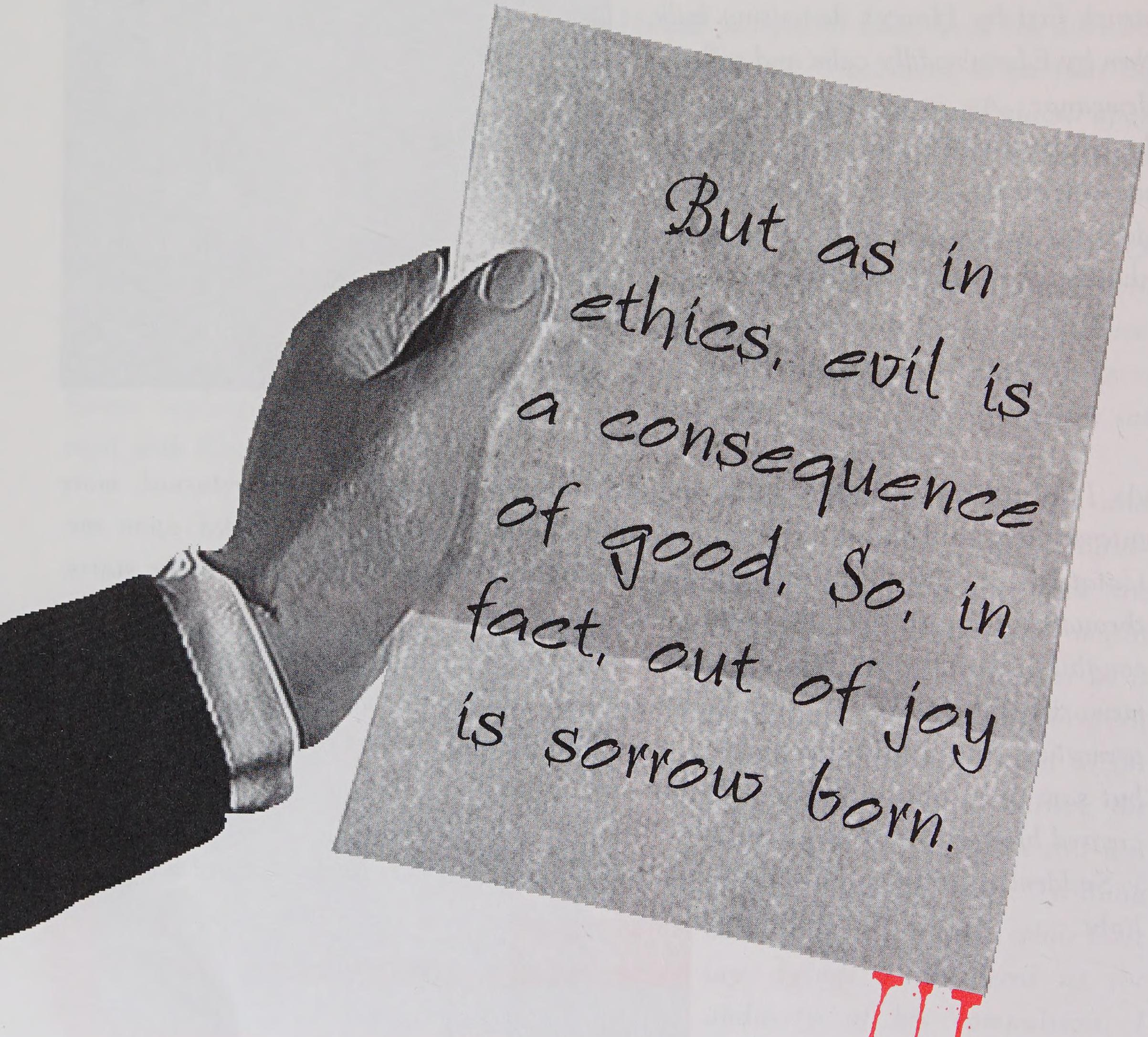


. . .

As I entered the hall, my affliction again overtook me. The voices returned, more intense and convoluted than before, as the blue velvet haze descended upon me. Catatonic, I walked—no, floated—along the second floor landing, down the stairs, through the Foyer, then the studio, and into the library. The melancholy tune of a songbird filled the air like a hymn. I drew closer to its cage, my heart full with memories of dear departed Elise, too young and vivacious to have suffered such a cruel, premature end. I peered into the cage, hoping to glimpse the bird issuing the sweet song, but saw only my sorrowful reflection cast back at me. I drew my hand along the creased brow of my reflected image.

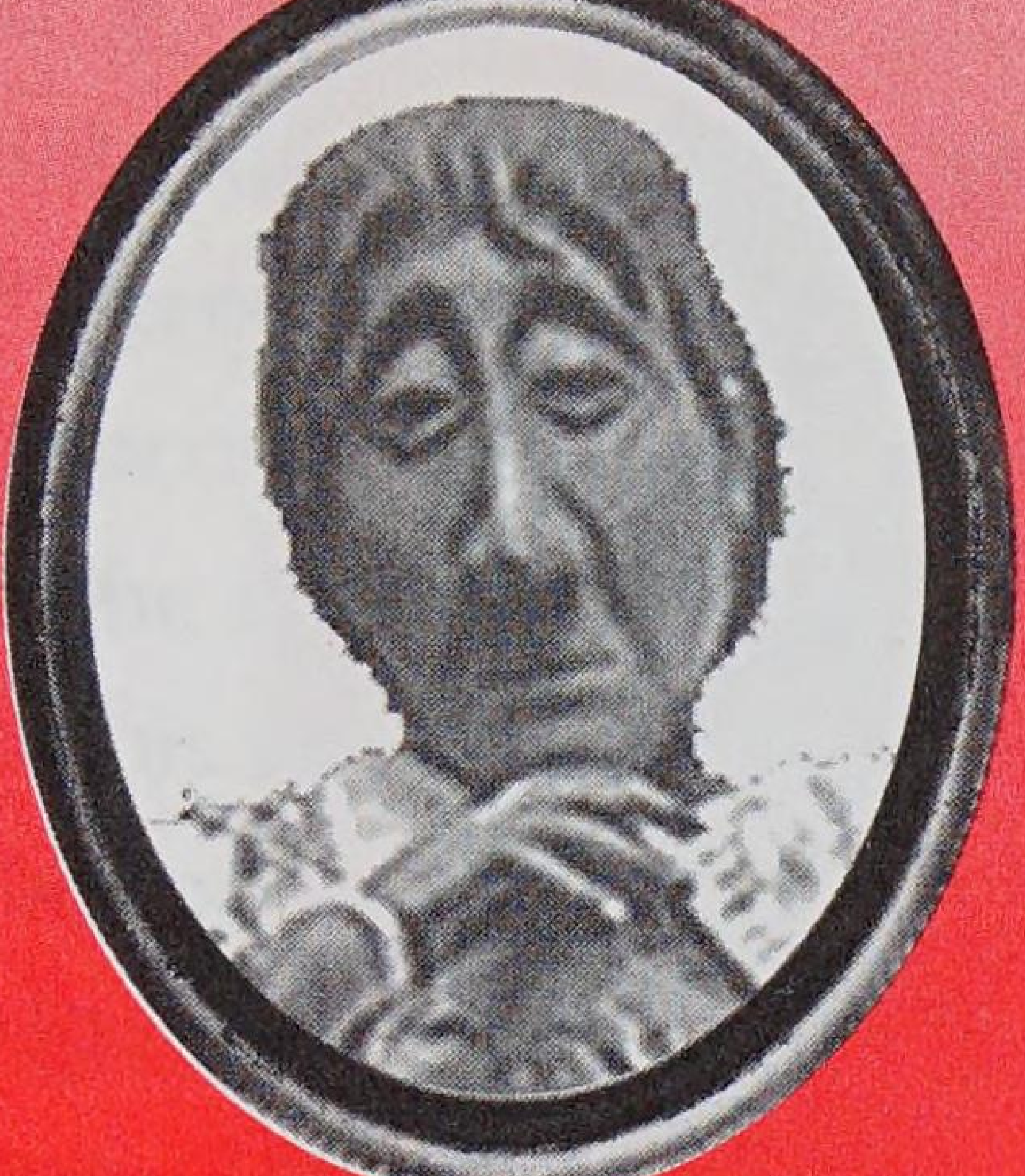
Suddenly, everything went blank, utterly blank, as I was hurled toward a brilliant light. . . .





But as in ethics, evil is a consequence of good, So, in fact, out of joy is sorrow born.

Chapter 8

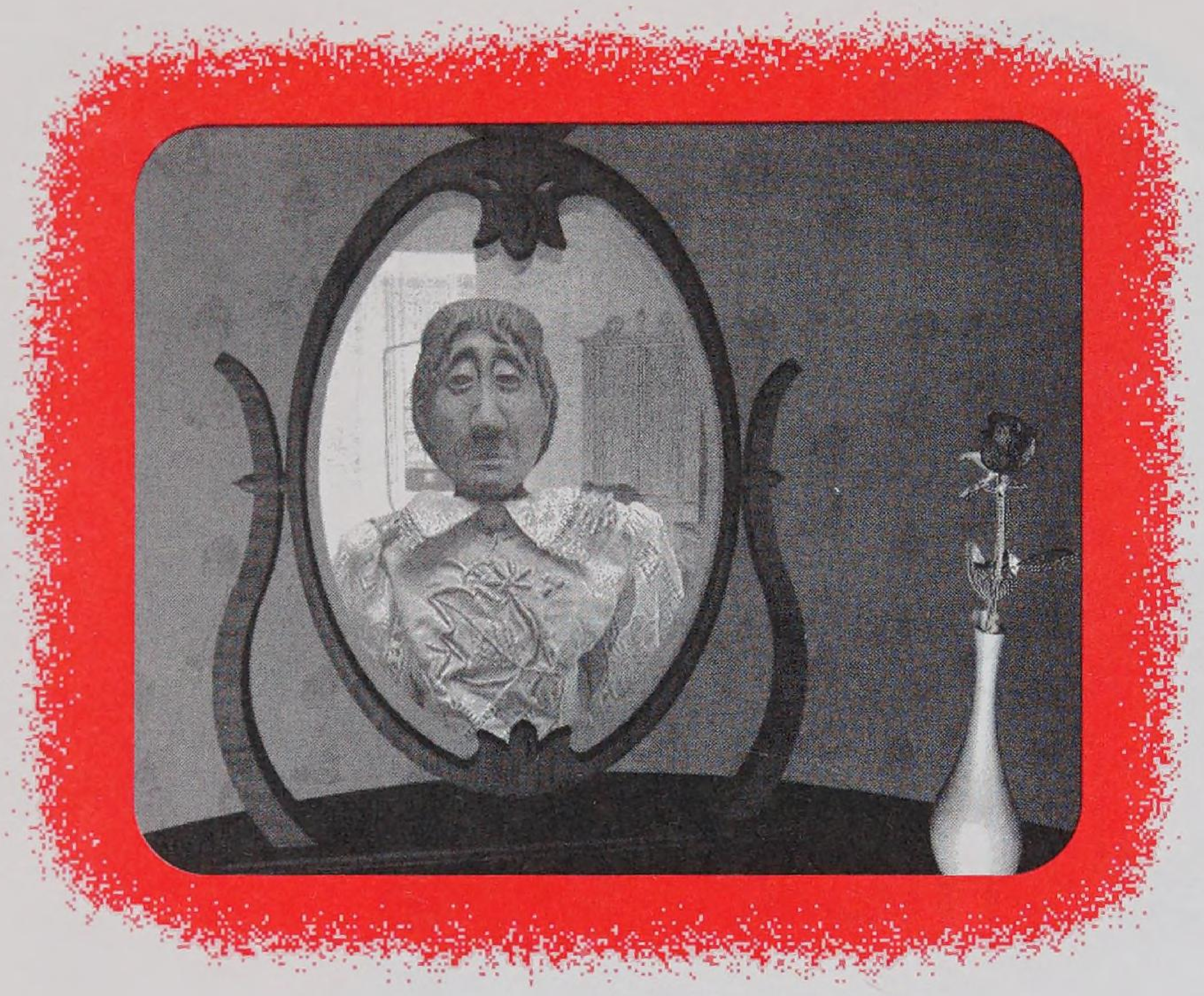


Berenice

Berenice

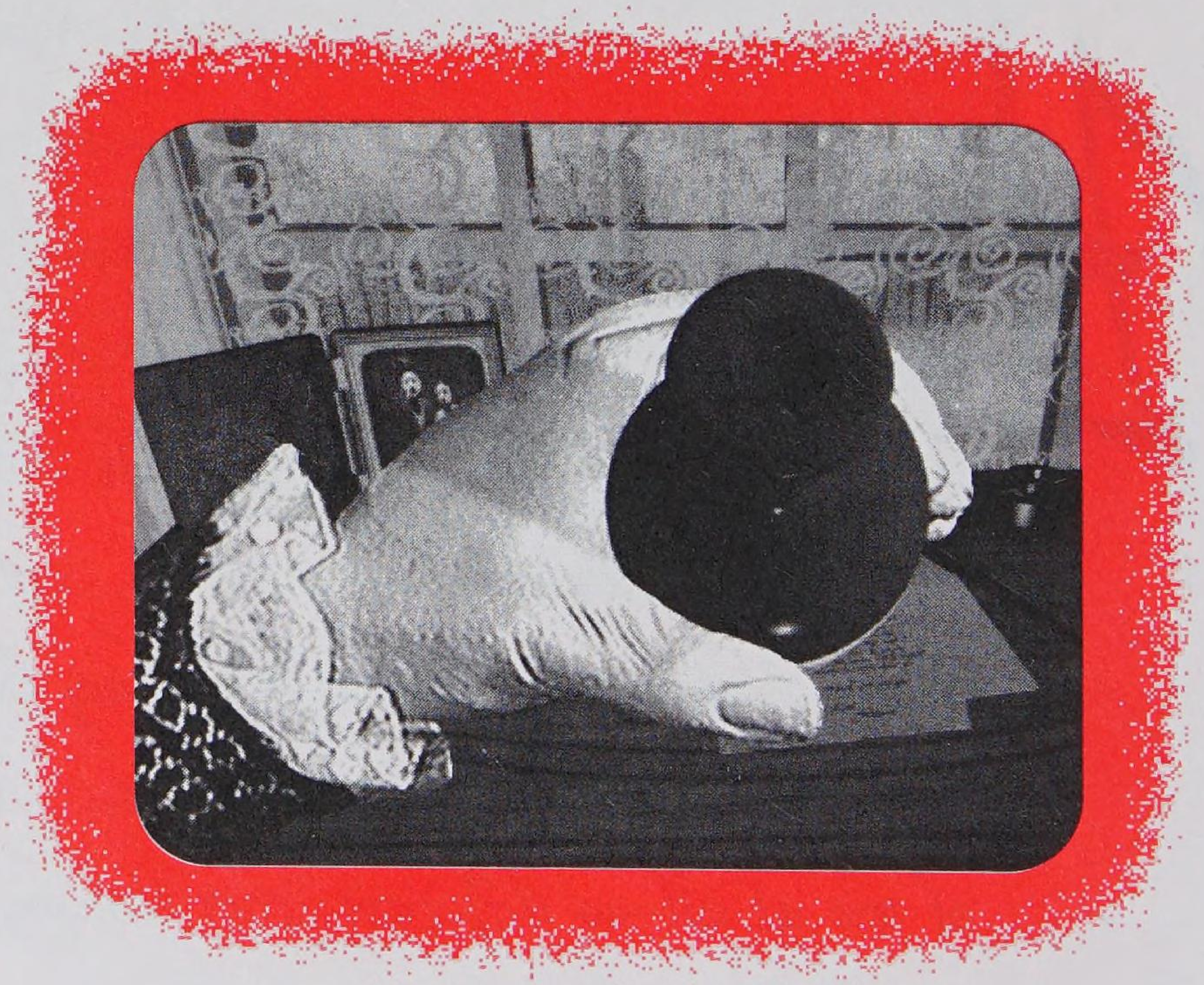
An Opulent Country Manor, 1800s

How is it that this hideous disease has so transformed my person? I look upon the image of this prematurely aged woman, eyes sunken in a face ravaged and drawn, and I am sickened in my heart and soul. Is it not enough that my energy has been depleted and my world set spinning, confining me to these rooms? Must I also repel the object of my desire with my lusterless guise? So remote is my cousin Egaeus, I wonder if he pays notice of me at all—so different from the joyful camaraderie of our youth. Even then, he was of a highly contemplative and serious nature.



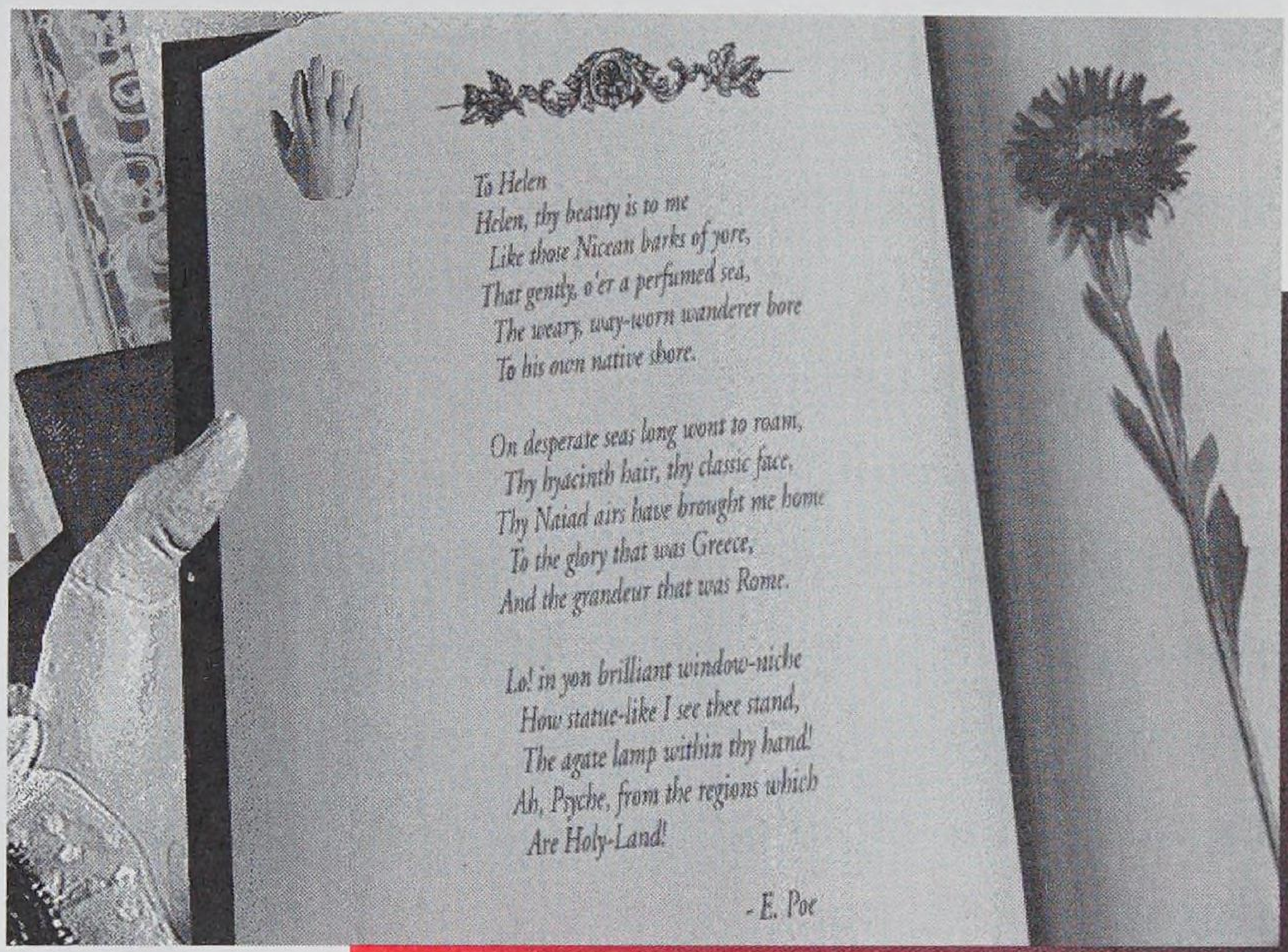
Yet, I shan't complain, for he continues to provide me with resplendent shelter and care in my hour of need, as his family has done since I was orphaned at the delicate age of five. His mother, Rosalinde, took me into the bosom of her home and raised me as if I were her own daughter.

Though my own reflected countenance may offend me, I need only to walk over to these splendid windows to view the magnificent grounds of my family's estate, which restores my spirits, if not my body. I often stand here, as I do now, gazing out at the greenery, remembering days past when I fairly danced o'er these hills and valleys, carefree and light as a starling. Health and adventure were mine, and love and kinship abounded. Yet, true love remains unrequited even now in my thirtieth year. Is it naive to still hope for happiness as my health and beauty wane?



Oh my, a wooziness has suddenly overtaken me. I shall sit here at my desk for a spell until my head clears. Where is my medicine? There, I've found it, on the desk. Ghastly as this elixir is, I willingly consume it as the doctor recommends. I must endeavor to regain my health, if for no other reason than to spare poor Egaeus further agitation. Looking after me surely must cause him great consternation, especially given the perniciousness of my disorder. My dear aunt Rosalinde suffered from the same affliction that now devours me. She died, God rest her soul, while he held her in his arms in the very study that now imprisons him.

Dear, dear Egaeus, how far from our youth we have strayed. I can't help but wonder, does his heart hold any remaining affection for me? Surely he once held me in his favor. It was on a Spring day much like today under a stand of sunlit sycamores tousled by a gentle breeze that I first realized my growing adoration for Egaeus. Here, between the pages of this very book. . .I have pressed a flower, marking a treasured poem Egaeus once recited to me. Stroking its delicate petals brings to mind a most vivid memory of that cherished moment. I was but a coltish girl of fifteen at the time, just three years younger than my mother was when she married my father.



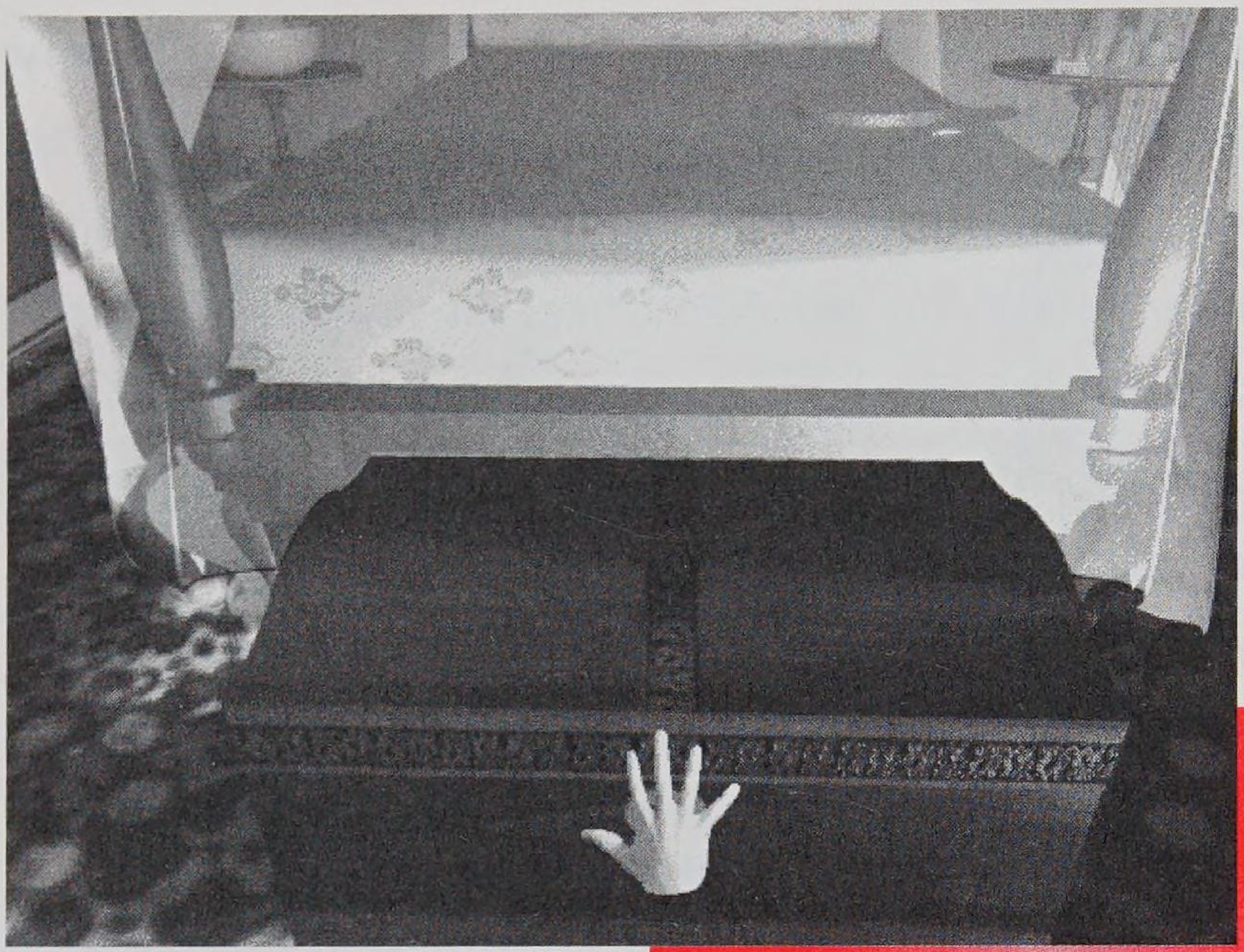
To Helen
Helen, thy beauty is to me
Like those Nicean barks of yore,
That gently, o'er a perfumed sea,
The weary, way-worn wanderer bore
To his own native shore.

On desperate seas long wont to roam,
Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,
Thy Naiad airs have brought me home
To the glory that was Greece,
And the grandeur that was Rome.

Lo! in yon brilliant window-niche
How statue-like I see thee stand,
The agate lamp within thy hand!
Ah, Psyche, from the regions which
Are Holy-Land!

-E. Poe

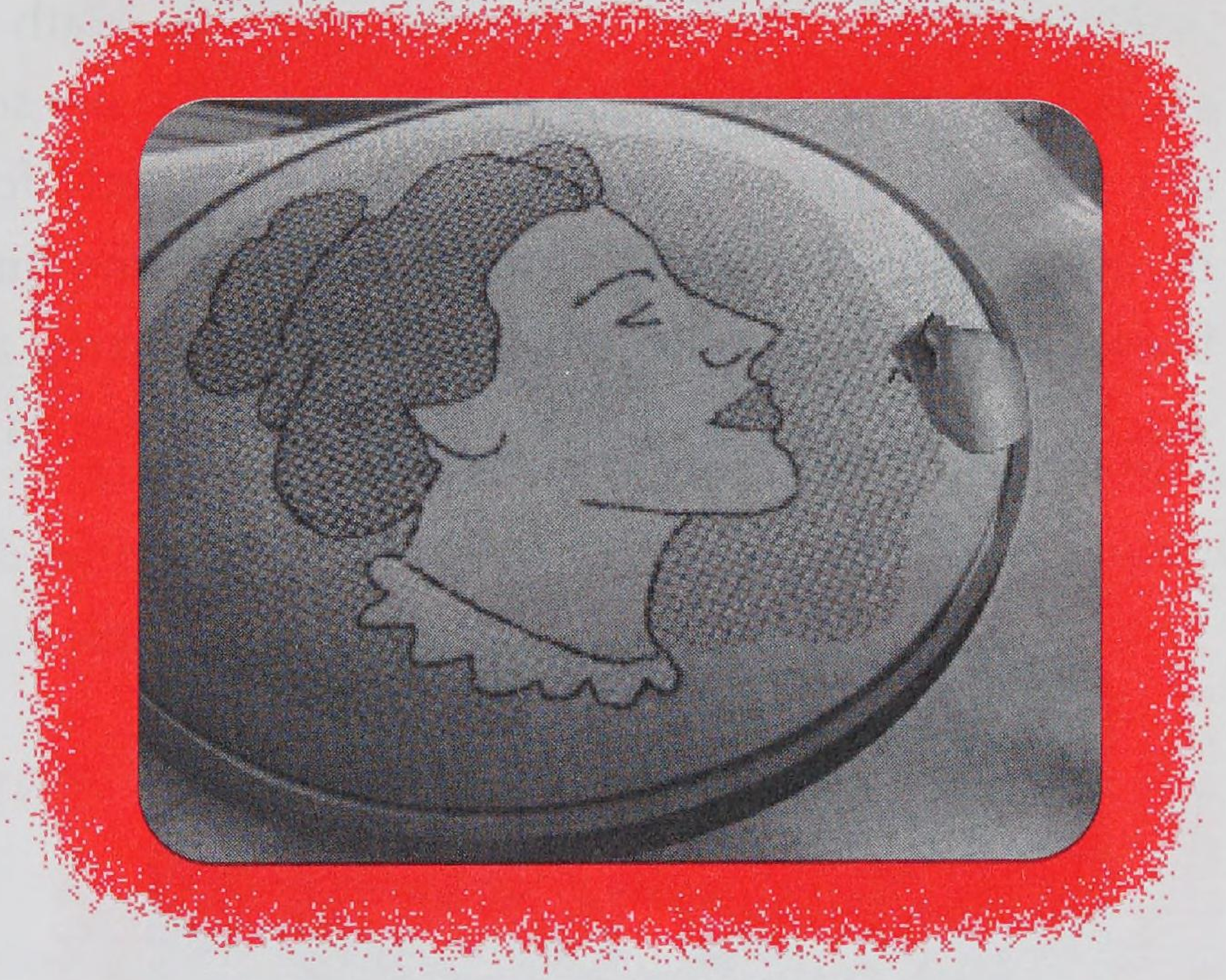
What little I know of my parents I learned from my aunt Rosalinde, my father's only sister. I cradle the only remaining portrait of my departed parents in the palm of my hand, as I often do, gazing at the young couple there. So in love they seem, though I barely remember them at all. Their death was sudden and tragic, or so I suppose. No one has spoken of their demise since that fated day nearly 25 years ago. How I wish they were here so that I might consult with them of my confusing unspoken love for cousin Egaeus.



My complete devotion to him is perhaps the only confidence I cannot fully reveal to my truest and oldest friend, Emily. Earlier this morning I wrote her, disclosing as much as I dare about my ardor. Should I divulge more? No, the less said, the better. I'll just inscribe my signature on this epistolary now, so that Katherine may post it in the morrow. Emily long ago stopped querying me as to my betrothal status. Were aunt Rosalinde alive, even she would probably have by now abandoned the possibility of my ever marrying anyone, least of all her only son, Egaeus. Who should want me with this cursed vertigo?

Why does hope still spring to my throat like a song that must be sung? I rise from the desk and move to the hope chest at the foot of my bed. Kneeling before it, I open the lid, and the pungent aroma of cedar wafts over me. As I gingerly caress the wedding gown waiting ever so patiently there, my aunt Rosalinde's words come back to me, bringing a tear of hope mixed with hopelessness to my fevered eyes.

Perhaps Egaeus is unaware of my affection for him. Perhaps his reserved temperament prevents him from discussing these matters with me. Perhaps I should take the initiative and communicate my feelings to him. No, I cannot will myself to speak the words aloud. I have even failed at my attempts to put my thoughts to writing. The vanity drawer hides my latest aborted attempt to confess my emotions to him. I remove the crumpled letter from the drawer and read it in humiliation before returning it to its safe place. No, a letter will not do. I must keep my deepest feelings to myself and pray for the day when his devotion to me awakens within him. To do otherwise would be brazen and undignified.



Dear me, I have become quite fatigued from these distressing thoughts and deep emotions. I'll just lie down here on the bed for a short while. The bed looks so inviting. There, that's better. Is that a knock on the door? Who might it be? Egaeus come to check on my welfare? Too weak to rise, I turn toward the door and bid my caller to enter. Oh . . . it is my handservant, Katherine, who has become quite indispensable to me. It was so thoughtful of Egaeus to hire her to look after me. Often her company is all that keeps me from total isolation and insanity.

Thank goodness for my needlework, which occupies both my hands and mind, breaking the monotony of my days. Today I shall work on my latest creation, a cameo Katherine claims to be the "spitting image" of me as a young woman. After completing the stitching and placing it on the bed, I look around my lovely quarters and sigh contentedly. I am reminded of the comforts and pleasures afforded me here in my cousin's sanctuary. Despite the long hours of solitude–and yes, moments of loneliness–I am indeed fortunate. I can only believe more convivial days lie ahead. I envision Egaeus and I growing old each in the pleasant, though still, company of one another. It is a vision I hold dear to my heart.

. . .

Feeling sufficiently revived, I make my way to Egaeus' study and knock on the door, not wanting to disturb him in his work. He does loath surprise entrances, so easy is he to startle. Though he allows me entrance, he does not so much as glance up from his studies as I approach him. I step closer, waiting patiently for him to acknowledge me, running my hand across the books lining the shelf behind him. Still, he remains engrossed in his books. I am drawn to Rosalinde's portrait, realizing as I gently touch her forehead, how much Egaeus resembles his dear departed mother, in appearance if not in disposition.

I gently brush his hair from his forehead, which feels clammy. Is he ill? Egaeus? What is it?

Oh, Egaeus! At last, at long last, my dreams have come true.

Yes, oh yes, Egaeus,

I will marry you!

Oh, oh, oh . . .
I feel quite faint . . . I, I, oh. . . .

. . .

With my wedding day approaching, I must ensure that I rest sufficiently. His sudden proposal has taxed me greatly, though he has made me so happy. Does the excitement show? When I look at my waxen reflection in the vanity mirror, I can't help but wonder if he did not ask me out of pity or duty. No, certainly not. My beloved Egaeus would have only noble motivations. It is not within his nature to deceive.

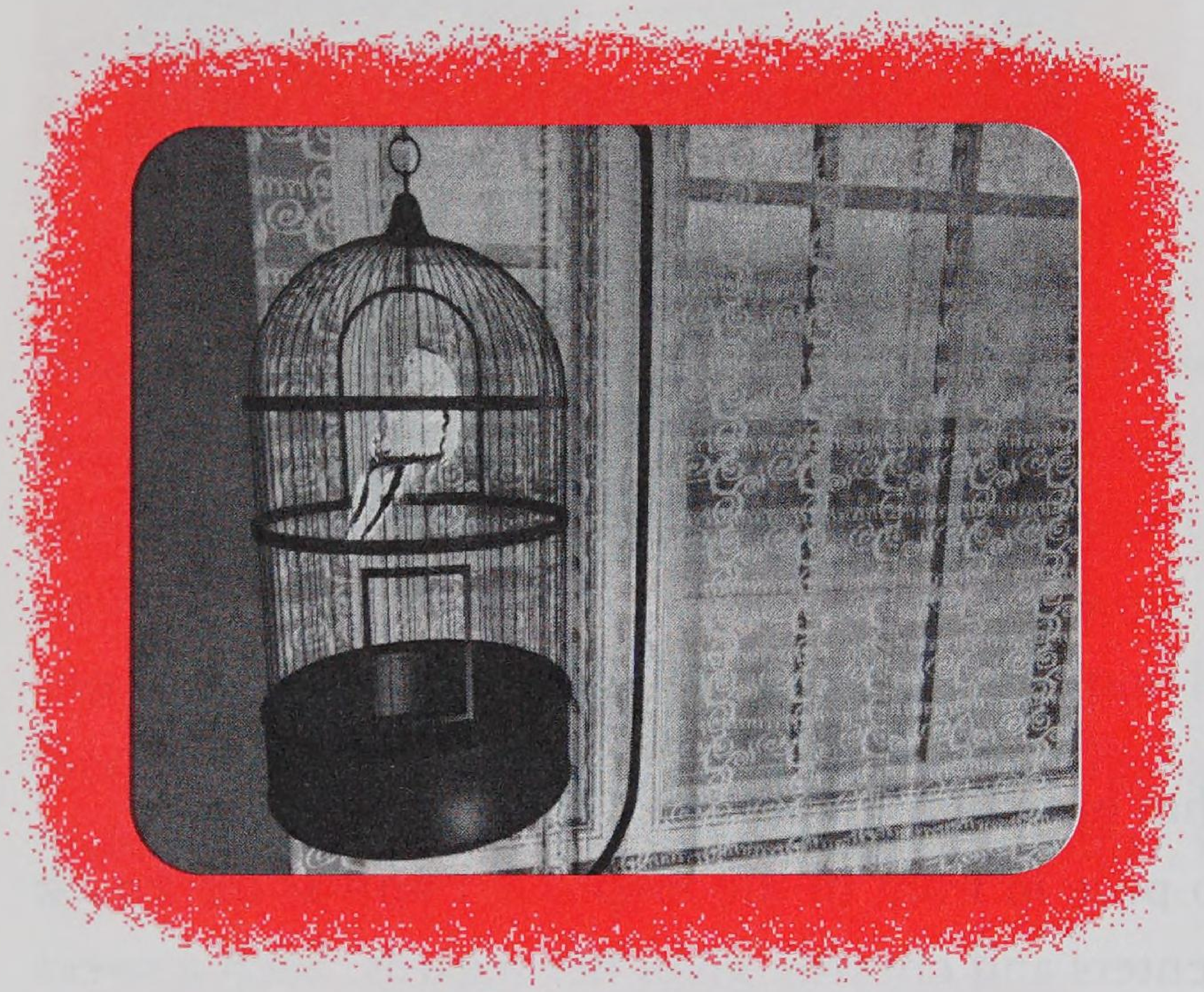
Still, my nervousness causes me to pace in front of the fireplace. I turn at the knock on the door and smile as Katherine enters and cheerily gives her regards. Such a sweet girl. Her encouragement, however, does little to calm my jitters.

Are his intentions pure?

Does he propose out of his affection for me or pity? These questions trouble my mind, as I return to the vanity and gaze at my image there. Once . . . once I was lovely. See? Traces of my beauty remain, do they not?

Yes, Egaeus will look so handsome, so very handsome. I must rest so that I may look my best in his mother's wedding gown. I go to the hope chest, open it, and trace my fingers along the gown's fine lace. Aunt Rosalinde would be so happy now. How I wish she was here to share our wedding day. She always said I was like a daughter to her. Now, I shall wear her gown to marry her son. For now, however, it will remain safely tucked inside this chest.

I am making Egaeus a special wedding gift. Where did I place my needlework? Oh, there it is, on the bed. I shall finish it now, while my strength holds and in plenty of time for the wedding. There, perfect!



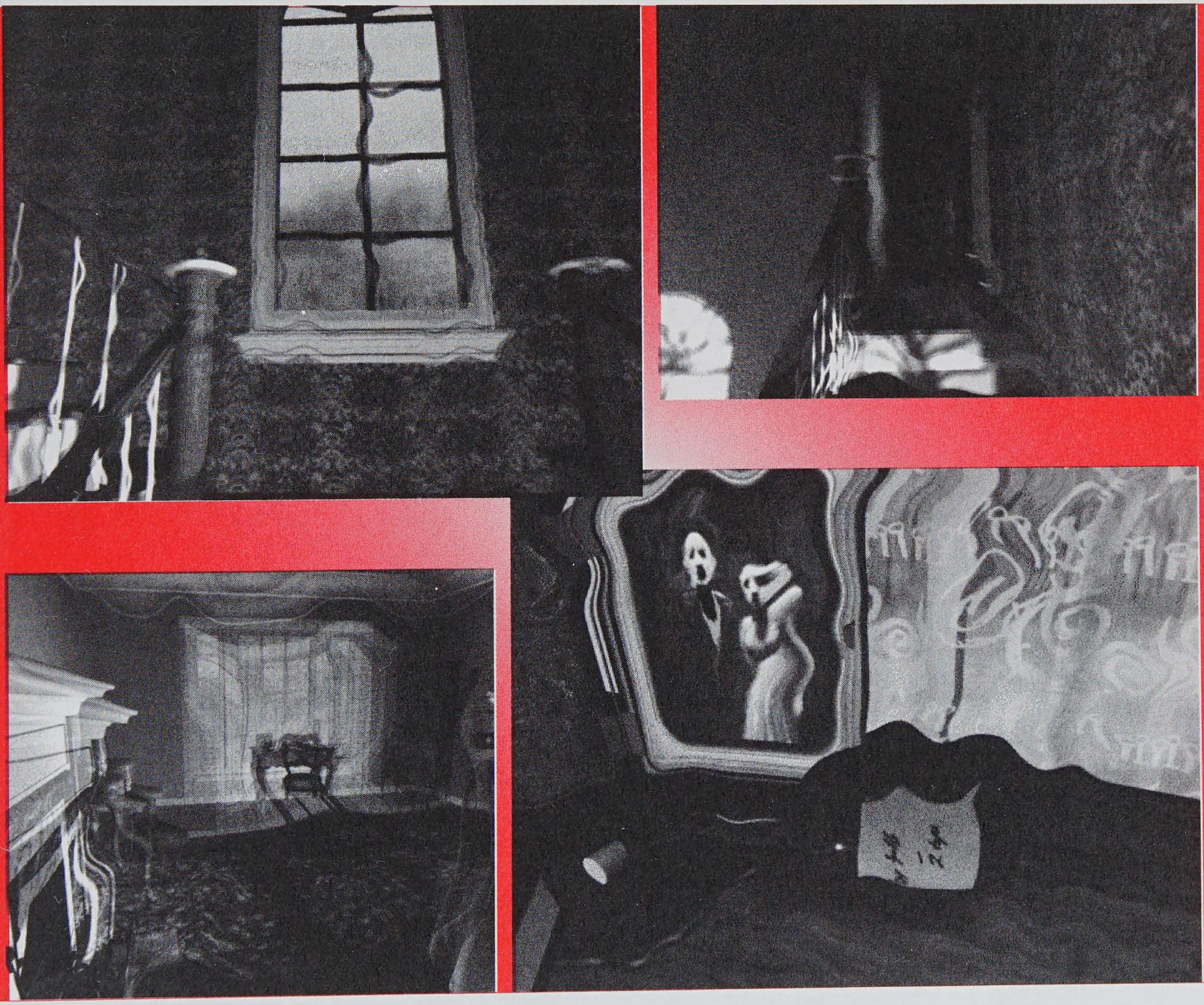
As I stand before the window near the desk looking out at the Autumn leaves, I can hardly believe this day has finally come. He has made me so happy, so very happy–my heart sings! I turn to my precious bird, sitting quietly in her cage, and gently caress her golden feathers. Dear God, my eyes play such tricks on me!

The day grows late! I must complete my letter to Emily, telling her the grand news. Oh, I do hope she will be able to attend our nuptials. Joyfully I sign the letter.

. . .

I wonder how my beloved is doing. He has become even more withdrawn and preoccupied these past weeks. We've hardly spoken a word. No doubt he has much on his mind and much to do in preparation for our wedding. However, we must discuss the details. I'll just quietly go down and approach him in his study. Egaeus? Poor dear, he is immersed in his work, completely distracted. Egaeus? Goodness, he looks so distressed. Is he ill? Dear?

Never mind. Another time. I'll simply leave him to his thoughts for the time being and return later. As I step out of the study, I am consumed with worry, and my head begins to swim. My darling looks unwell, not well at all, and I fear an attack coming on. Can I make it up the stairway? I must make it to my room, to my medicine. Oh dear, I can hardly see, the swooning has become so severe. My hands tremble as I reach for the medicine on my desk. Oh no! My medicine. . . .



DEAR GOD! WHERE AM I?

I cannot breathe!

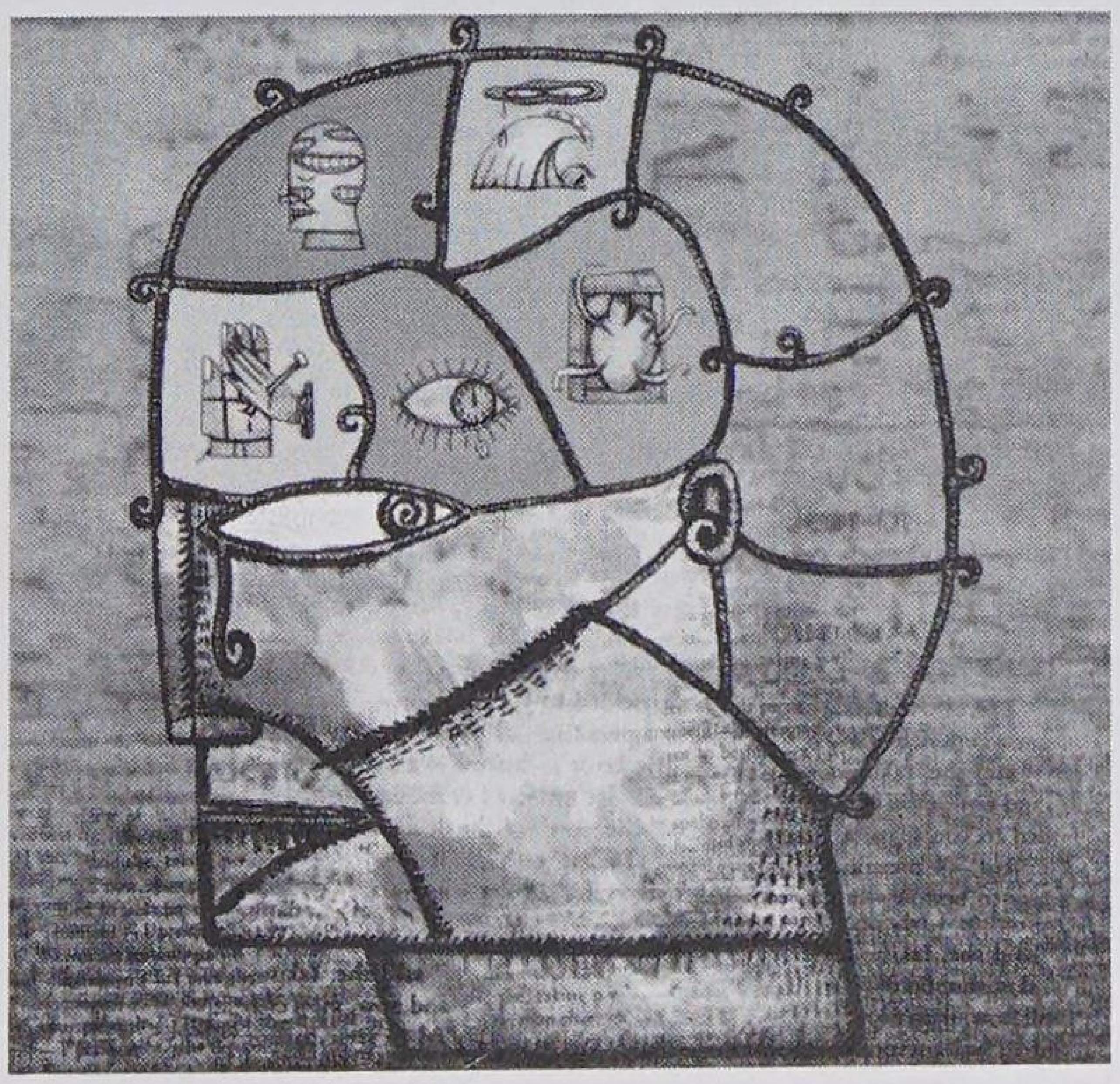
Help!

Let me out!

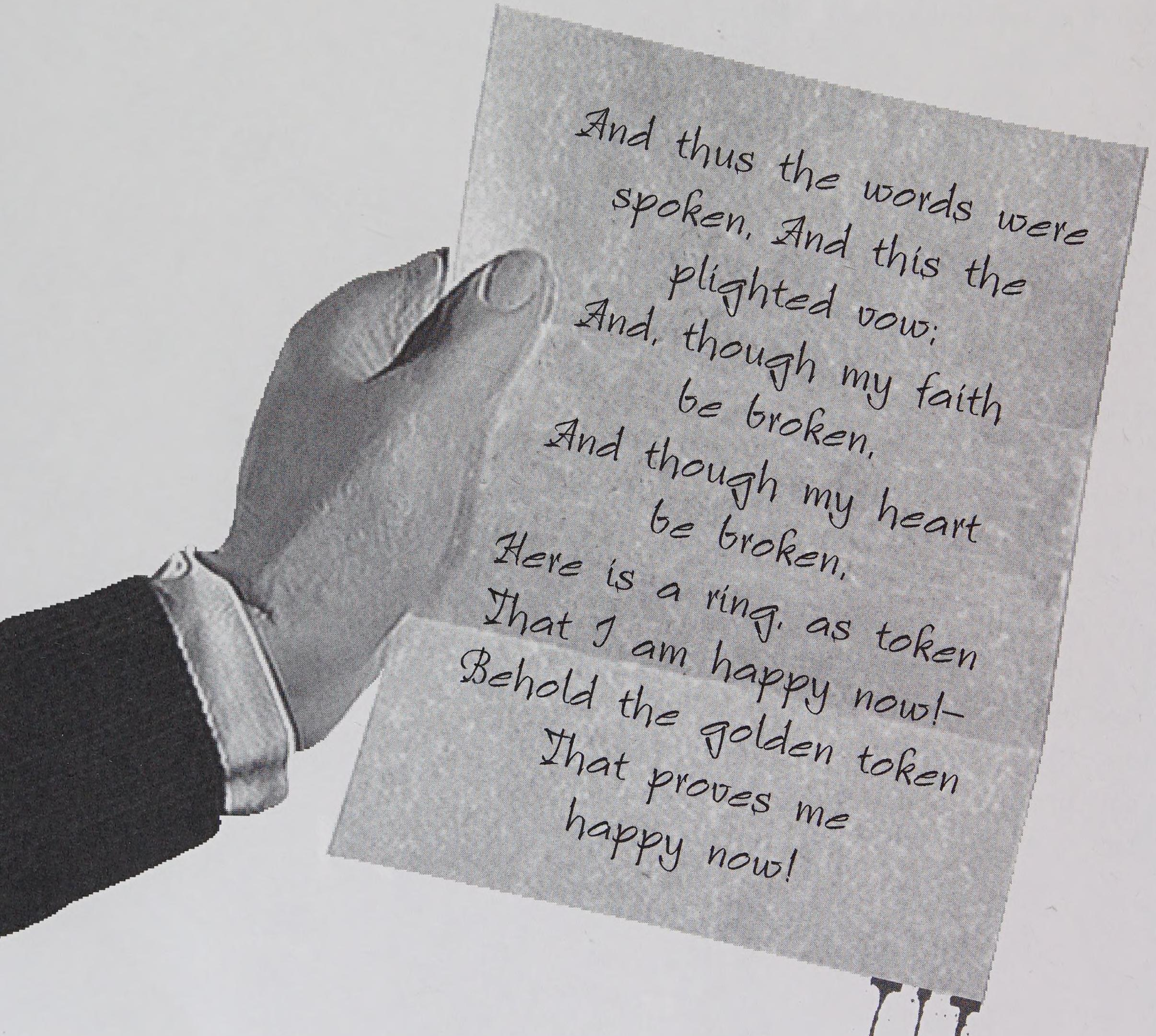
I pound and pound on the coffin lid, furiously screaming, "I'm alive!"

Then, suddenly, the sound of a shovel tearing through the earth.

Hurry, please hurry. Thank God! My love has come to save me! Egaeus? Yes, it must be. Yes, yes, I feel the fresh air brushing my face. The lid opens, and I see the moonlight cast upon the handsome face of my betrothed . . .



AUGH!!!



And thus the words were
spoken, And this the
plighted vow;
And, though my faith
be broken,
And though my heart
be broken,
Here is a ring, as token
That I am happy now!—
Behold the golden token
That proves me
happy now!

Chapter 9

Malevolence: Day Five

October 12, 1809

I too, was in love once a great many years ago, or so it seems. Love is a beaten path best traversed with the utmost clarity and respect for the minions who have journeyed the road before. To some it is a fortress most carefully guarded; to others it is an obsession of the mind, a prison from which there is no escape.

. . .

Shaken to the very depths of my being, I regained control of my wits at some ungodly hour this morning, standing alone and dazed in Edwin's library. My teeth chattered as the chilled, acrid air burned my eyes and nostrils, and a piercing pain shot through my skull and down the back of my neck. I felt suffocated by the convoluted shackles of kinship and romantic love that now permeated both my nightmare and waking world—the same debaucheries that had driven me to a life of wandering many years ago. Emotional entanglements such as these bring out the most vile aspects of humanity: jealousy, greed, obsession, misery. So fine is the line between love and hate.

Today, the burden of my family's blackened souls weighs heavily upon me. While quietly I acquiesced to the eccentricities of cousin Edwin and my brother Henry, I inwardly raged against the hideous injustice of young Elise's death. Their tug of war over her possession took precedence over attending to her pernicious condition. Had either of them looked beyond their selfish desires and sought the expert assistance of a physician or healer, perhaps her life might have been saved. Instead, we faced the unspeakable burden of entombing the lovely sprite in dark, dank chambers for eternity. Surely, none of us will ever be the same for our loss and shame.

Throughout the morning, the sound of hammering echoed menacingly through the house, rattling my bones and my nerves. Once I had sufficiently bolstered my senses with a few moments of solitary meditation and a jigger of brandy, I trudged upstairs to Elise's bedroom. With a deep breath, I hesitantly entered the room, just as Ambers pounded the *last nail into Elise's coffin. A shudder ran uncontrollably up my spine, as if sealing that coffin somehow portended certain doom.*

Frankly, I was relieved at Edwin's decision to inter Elise in the vault, rather than burying her in the swampy grounds surrounding the mansion. God only knows what unearthly creatures lurk there, waiting to exhume and desecrate her remains. I grabbed the lantern from the table, as my trio of companions hefted the coffin to their shoulders.

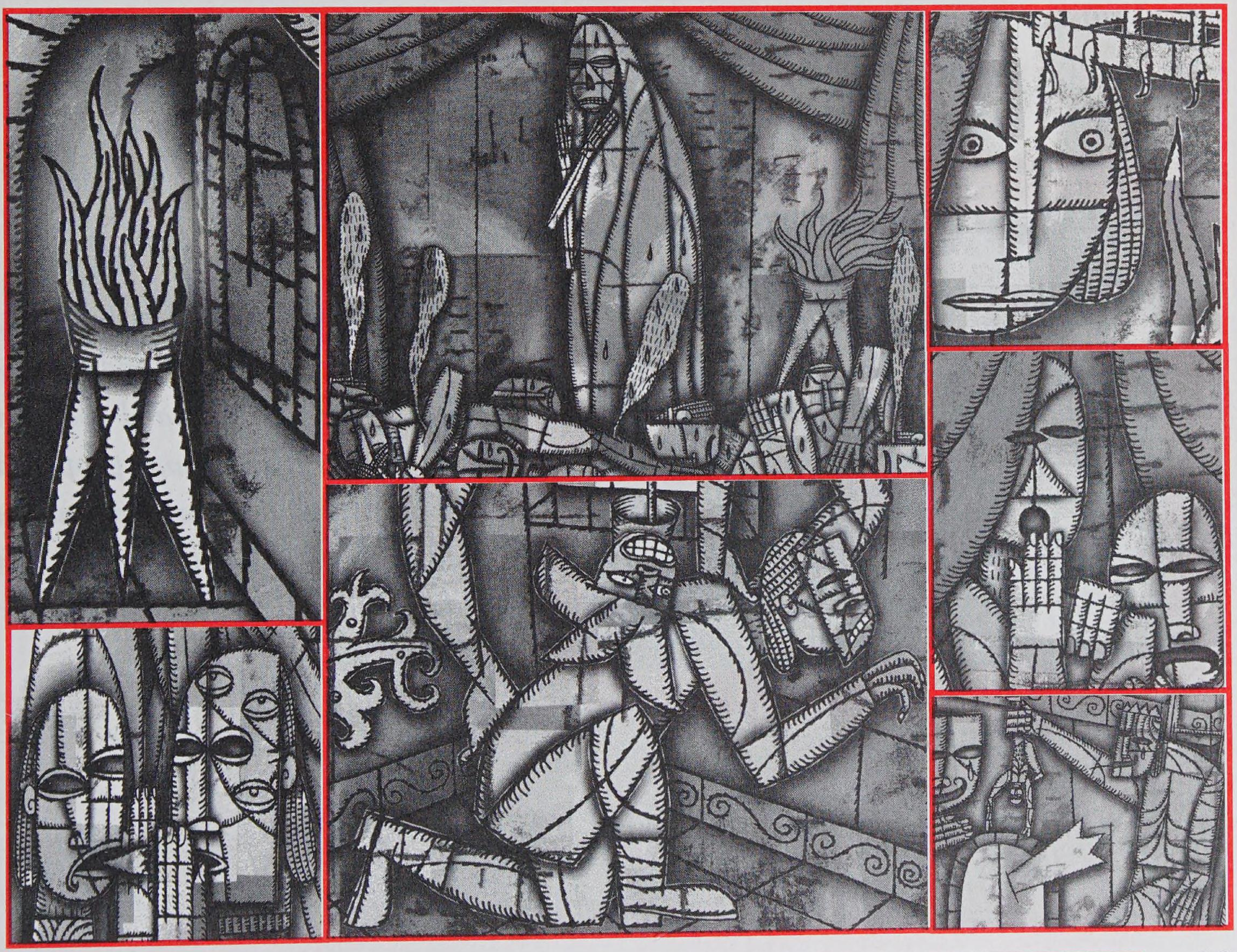
I led the way down the stairwell, down to the cellar, and then to the vault, carrying the lantern. We entered the vault, and the discordant pall bearers placed the coffin on the trestle waiting there. Ambers must have awakened early this morning to prepare the burial mew. We enacted the interment without ceremony. Yet, animosity permeated the air like a rank odor that one cannot conceal with the sweetest perfume.

When at last the burial was complete and we turned to leave, Henry hung back. He pleaded, illogically, for me to leave the lantern for Elise. Grief blinds all reason, I suppose, and it was such a minor, benign request. So, I placed the lantern on the shelf. Reluctantly, we left our young cousin alone to her peace, sealed the vault, and marched solemnly through the cellar in darkness like defeated soldiers.

. . .

My stomach began to churn, and I broke out in a cold sweat as my vision dimmed. "Dear God, no more, not again," I begged, fighting to ward off the narcotic fall from consciousness that overtook me yet again. I stumbled back through the cellar to the vault and flung open the door.

Against my will, my feet led me into the vault—but alas, it was not the vault at all. No, it was no place I recognize, not of this dimension. My bewildered eyes beheld an enormous, most elaborate and primitive cathedral. I was pulled toward a brilliant tapestry suspended from the ceiling. The closer I drew to the tapestry, the more grotesque it became and the more frightened I grew. But I could not turn away nor awaken from my trance. As I stood transfixed, the images began to mutilate and contort, ever changing, and a voice thick with vengeance and tinged with evil rang out. Powerless, I listened and watched repulsed as the living painting depicted scene after scene of horror and the voice—haunting and familiar, so familiar—deafened me with its tale of terror.



Malevolence: Day Five

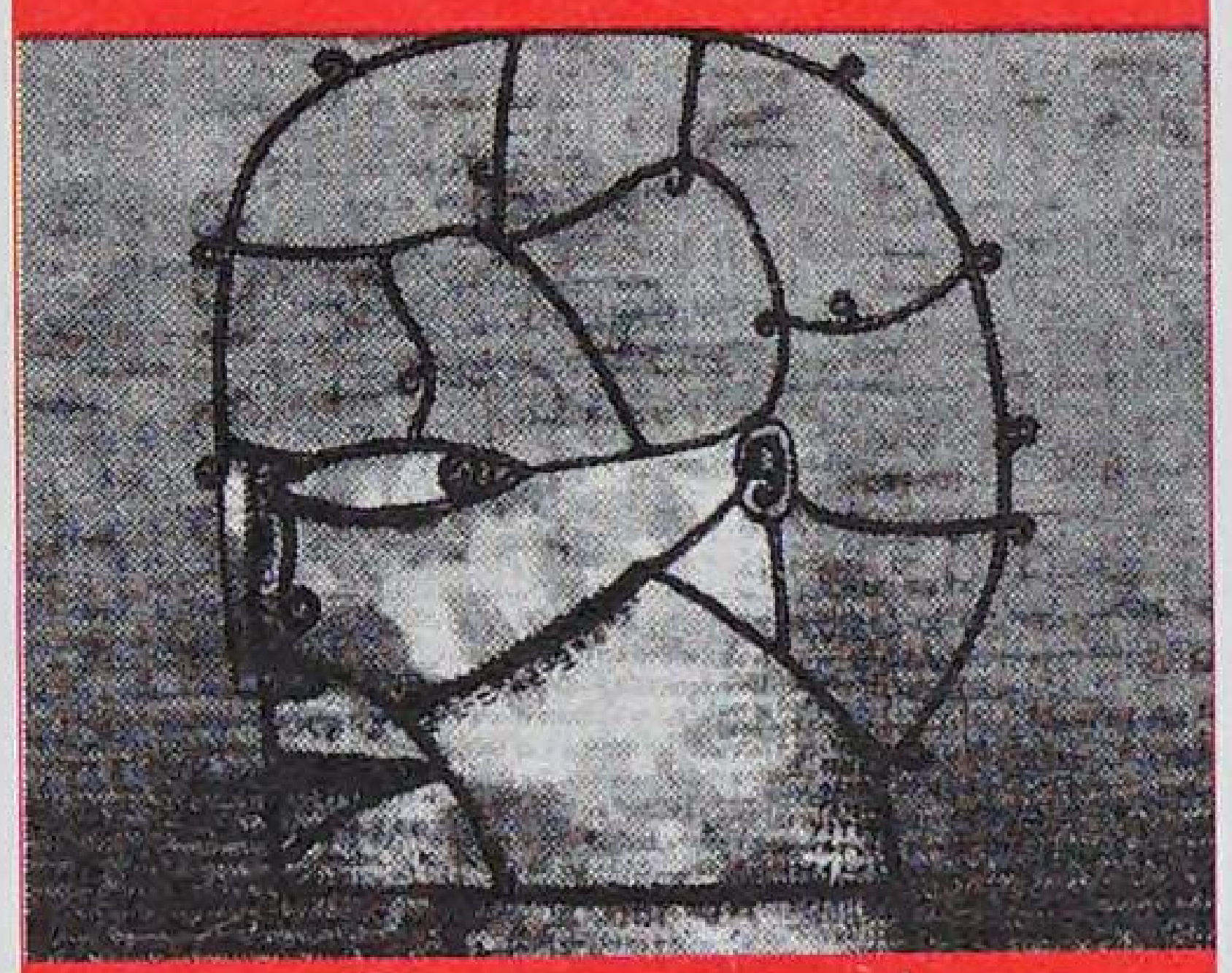
When at long last the diabolical speaking mural freed me from its grasp, I found myself back in Edwin's cellar. However, I remained locked in a manic trance that cast my nightmare realm in a blue hue cursed with alien voices.

• • •

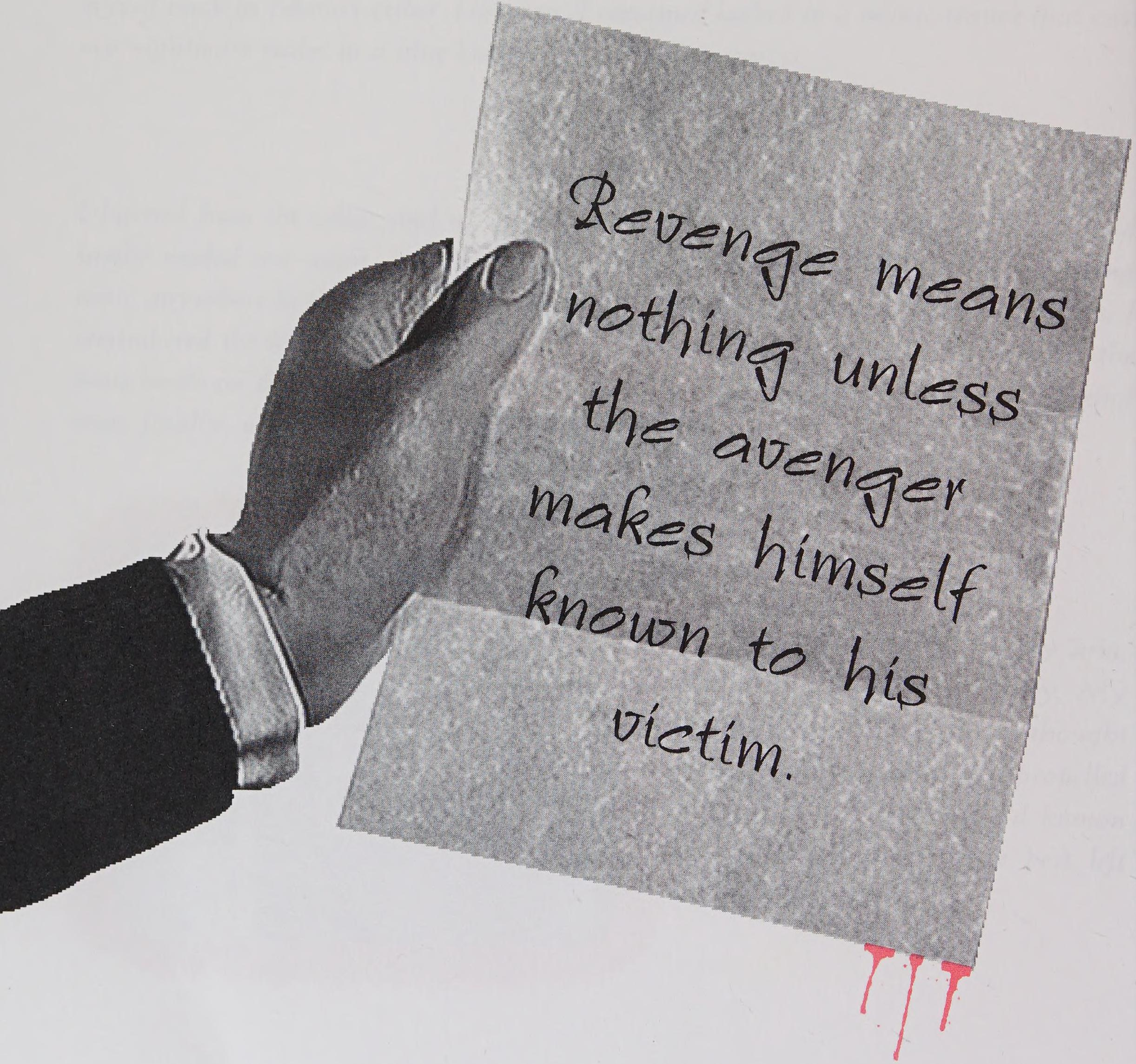
I hurried from the cellar and up the stairwell. My frayed nerves and battered mind sorely needed rest—soon, some way, any way. I had been unable to find a sleeping tonic anywhere in the house, and my whiskey had mysteriously disappeared. Then, I remembered the wine in the conservatory and went there to fetch it. I approached the wine bottle on the table, and brushed my hand over its cool smooth surface, thinking now, finally, would come relief.

A tingling inched up my arm, coursing through my body. My soul left the plane (that I thought to be reality), and I was propelled far, far from all that I'd known into a hellish existence best left unknown . . .

Dream



PORTAL



Revenge means nothing unless the avenger makes himself known to his victim.

Chapter 10

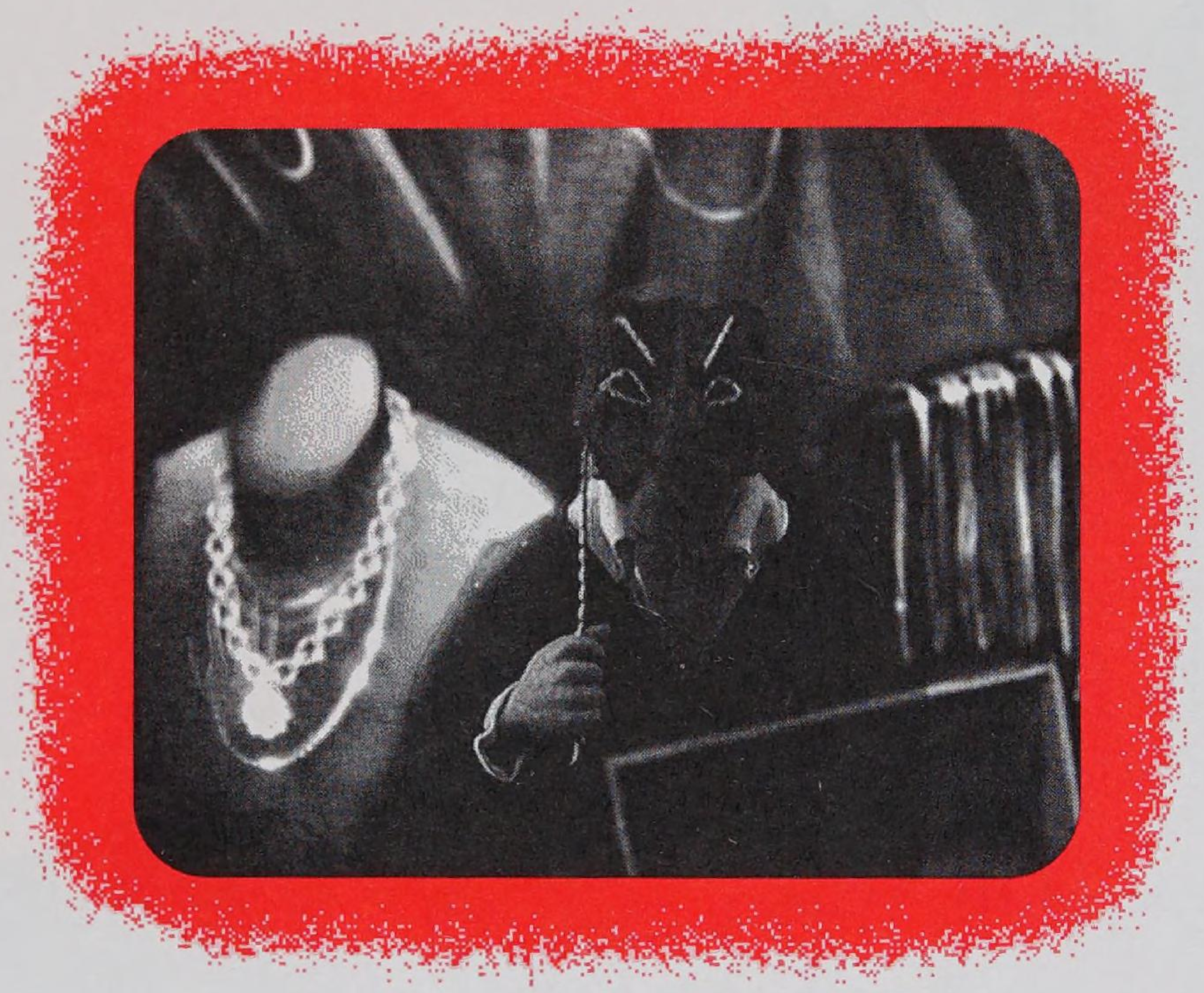
The Cask of Amontillado

Montresor

Florence, Italy, 1803

There are great walls that surround each individual. Walls of temperance, of heartlessness, of rage. The walls are, no doubt, constructed brick by brick, throughout the duration of a life. Once built, they cannot be torn down. My family has constructed many walls. You will find our insignia etched upon the walls of the great villas occupying the hills and valleys of this fertile land. It is with great pride that I carry on the family tradition of master craftsmanship. We have, shall I say, a specialization of enduring quality and unique expression.

Let there be no mistake, I am Montresor of the great family of the same name. I am a man of sterling veneer. With the keenness of an eagle, I soar, plunging after my prey with calculated determination. My unending prayer–punish with impunity–repeats itself like a demonic chant.



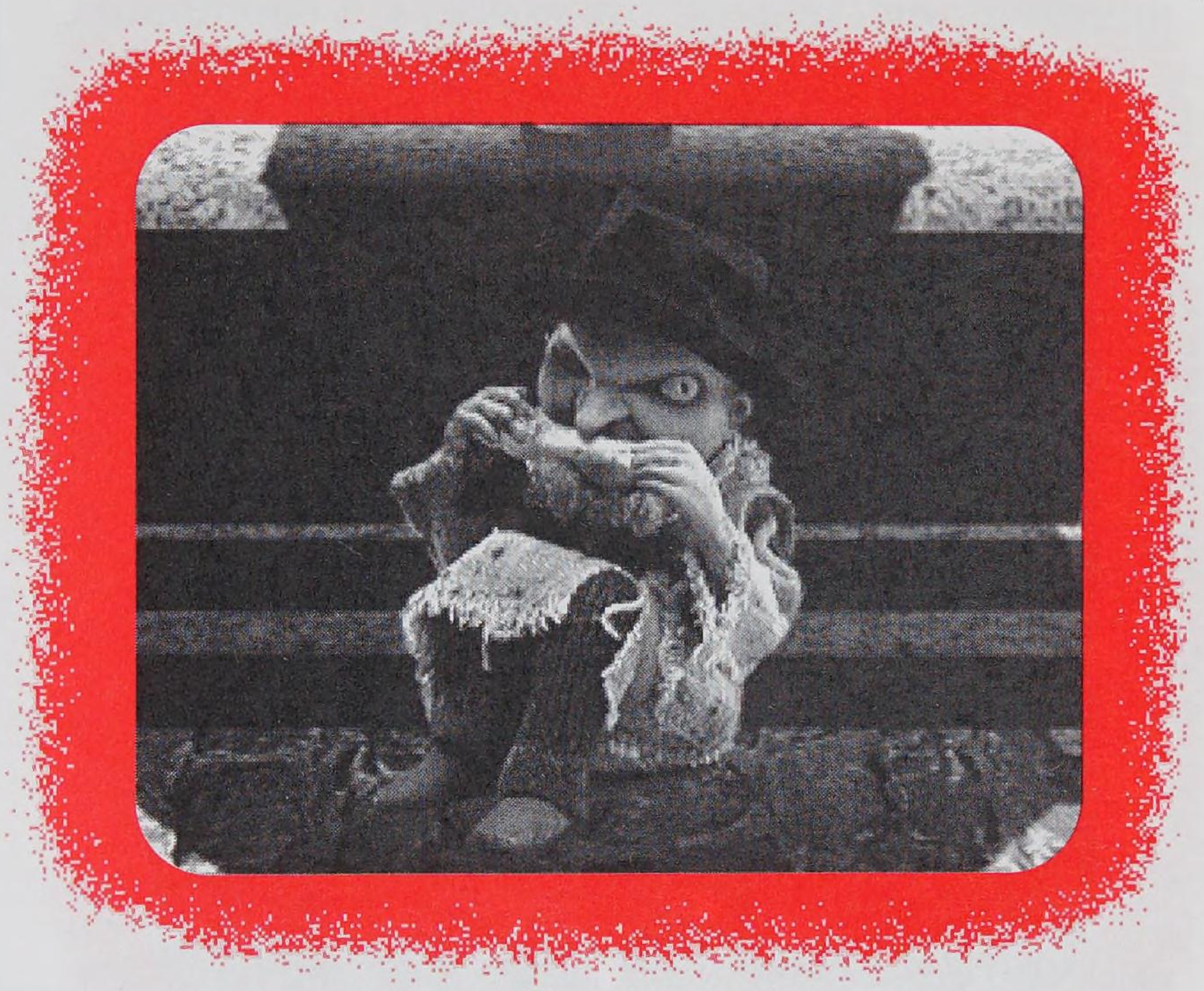
Of course, there are those mongrels among us who dare to blacken the name of Montresor with their cunning and evil deeds. There walks among these very streets tonight a man of great self-import and greed who has done serious and repeated injury to my honor. A cheat who basks in the stolen treasures of his victims! A scoundrel who relishes in his filthy riches whilst plotting his next coup! A despicable glutton whose very name, when spoken, leaves a vile and bitter taste in my mouth, lingering on my tongue like spoilt wine! The image of his bloated, lavishly decorated body and soulless face with its laconic sneer burn in my brain as I near the street carnival thrown in his honor. His honor, indeed! I spit his name from my mouth: Fortunato!

The injuries of his countless misdeeds against me–and now this unforgivable insult–cannot, will not, go unavenged. Oh yes, I shall be avenged. Misery doth so love company.

. . .

I gaze into the shop window, covering my face with a half-mask to disguise the dark glee glowing within me. "How rich," I think, caressing the gold chains dangling before me. The plot I have concocted is nothing short of genius, sheer unadulterated genius–the perfect revenge for a thief and adulterer. With self-satisfaction I look into the reflection of my own eyes, mockingly intelligent–the calm and steely gaze of a man prepared to inflict a torture of duration and terror befitting the crimes against my person.

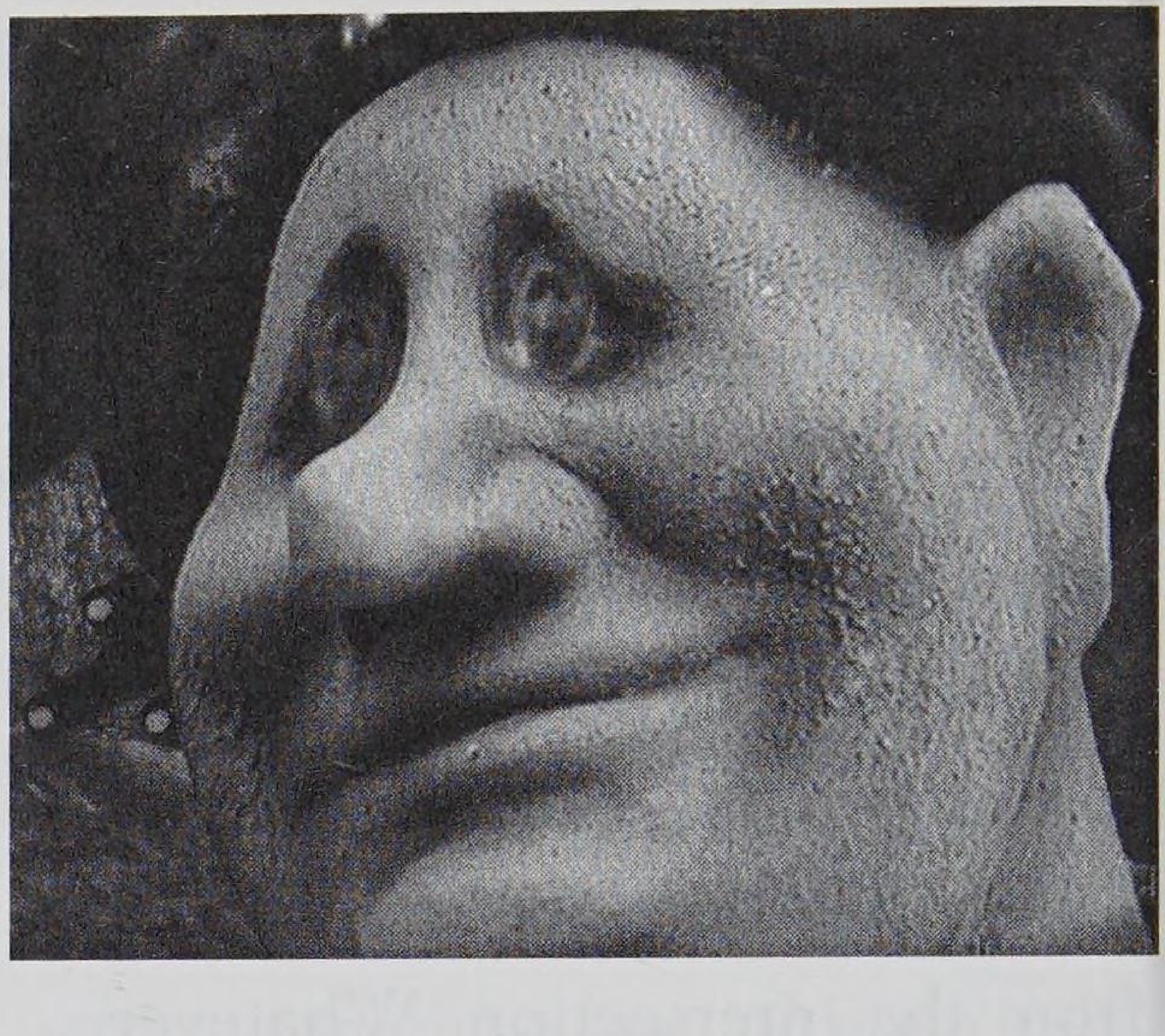
Slowly and with purpose, I turn and stroll down the street. One of my servants beckons me from the intersection. Whatever could it be now? My attention is drawn to a beggar sitting on the street to my left. I pause and watch in disgust as he gnaws on a bone. The decrepit dog is likely one of Fortunato's victims, come to join in the gala event.



I turn from the sight that offends me and continue my stroll down the cobblestone street toward my frantically waving servant, stifling my annoyance. Upon delivering my orders to the neurotic imbecile, I turn my back to dismiss him. They're all the same. No one is to be trusted.

There, on the bridge, I spy the grand fool himself. Discretely, I move to the street edge and stand to the left of two hooded revelers. He does not suspect, does not even notice me watching, waiting oh so patiently for my opportunity.

My eyes burn with hatred as I gaze upon his repulsive figure in the distance. With my hand I swipe at his form, rocking drunkenly on the bridge, and suddenly his image looms before me in my mind's eye. I chuckle to myself at the ingenuity of my scheme. Oh yes, I know his weakness well.



I shall make my entry now, I think, as I wander to the intersection of the street and the bridge. Fortunato's servant suddenly appears and questions me–me!–of his master's whereabouts.

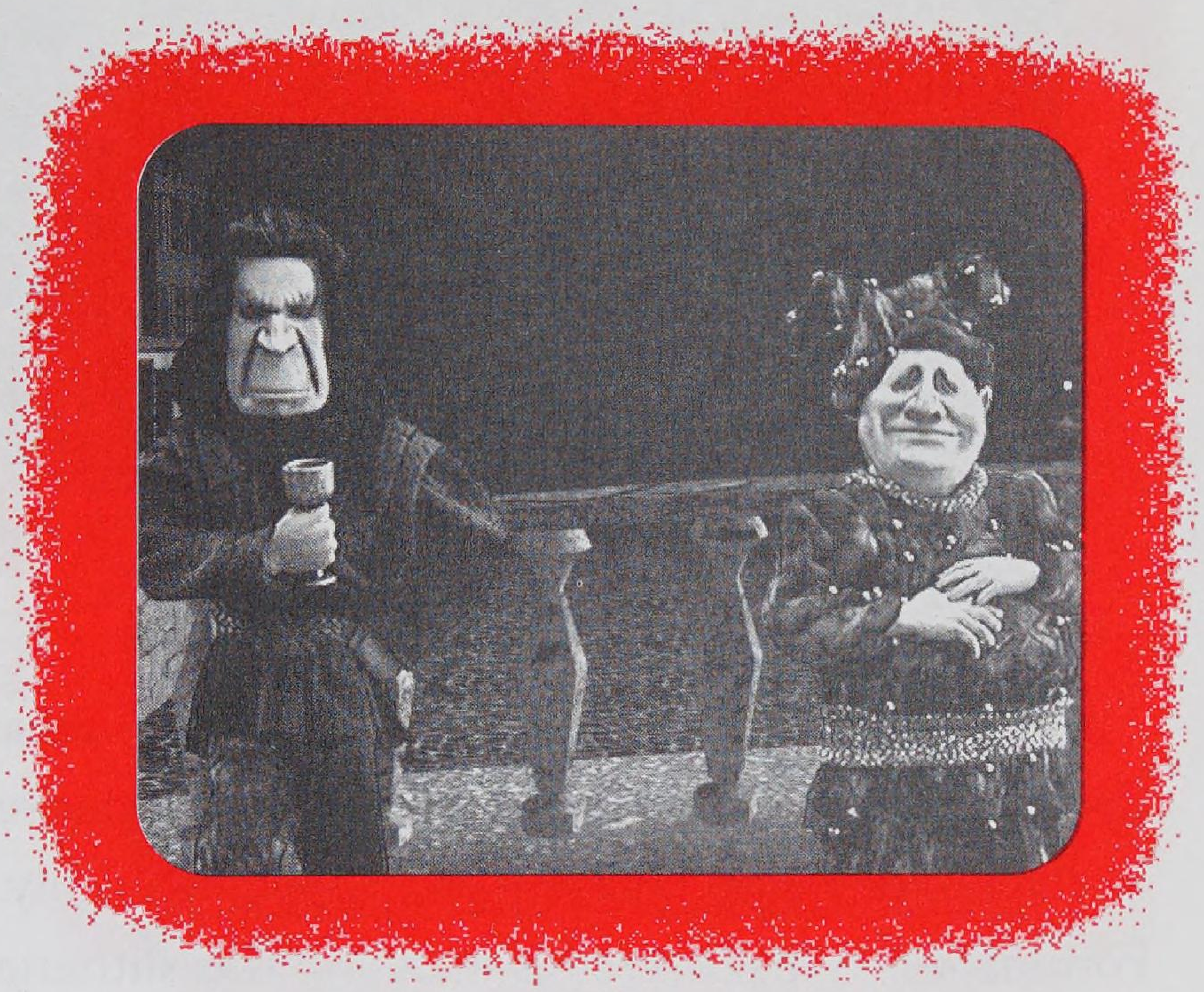
Fortunato? Why yes, as a matter of fact, I did encounter him earlier this evening. Where oh where can that silly old jester have gone? I do hope the long-suffering Mrs. Fortunato doesn't lay awake the long night awaiting his return home.

I return to my post at the street's edge, this time standing to the right of the hooded revelers. How easily I blend in with the crowd as I slowly make my way to the incorrigible host. Look at him, holding court on the bridge as if he owned it. Perhaps he does, as he acquires every square inch of the city from its rightful owners, his growing list of debtors.

Look at them, sheep cowering to his false grandeur! Waving my hand over his gloating form on the bridge, I silently shout, "Not I!" Never shall I succumb to his spurious power. Over my dead body! Or rather, his! I step back from the rail, ready now to make my appearance known.

. . .

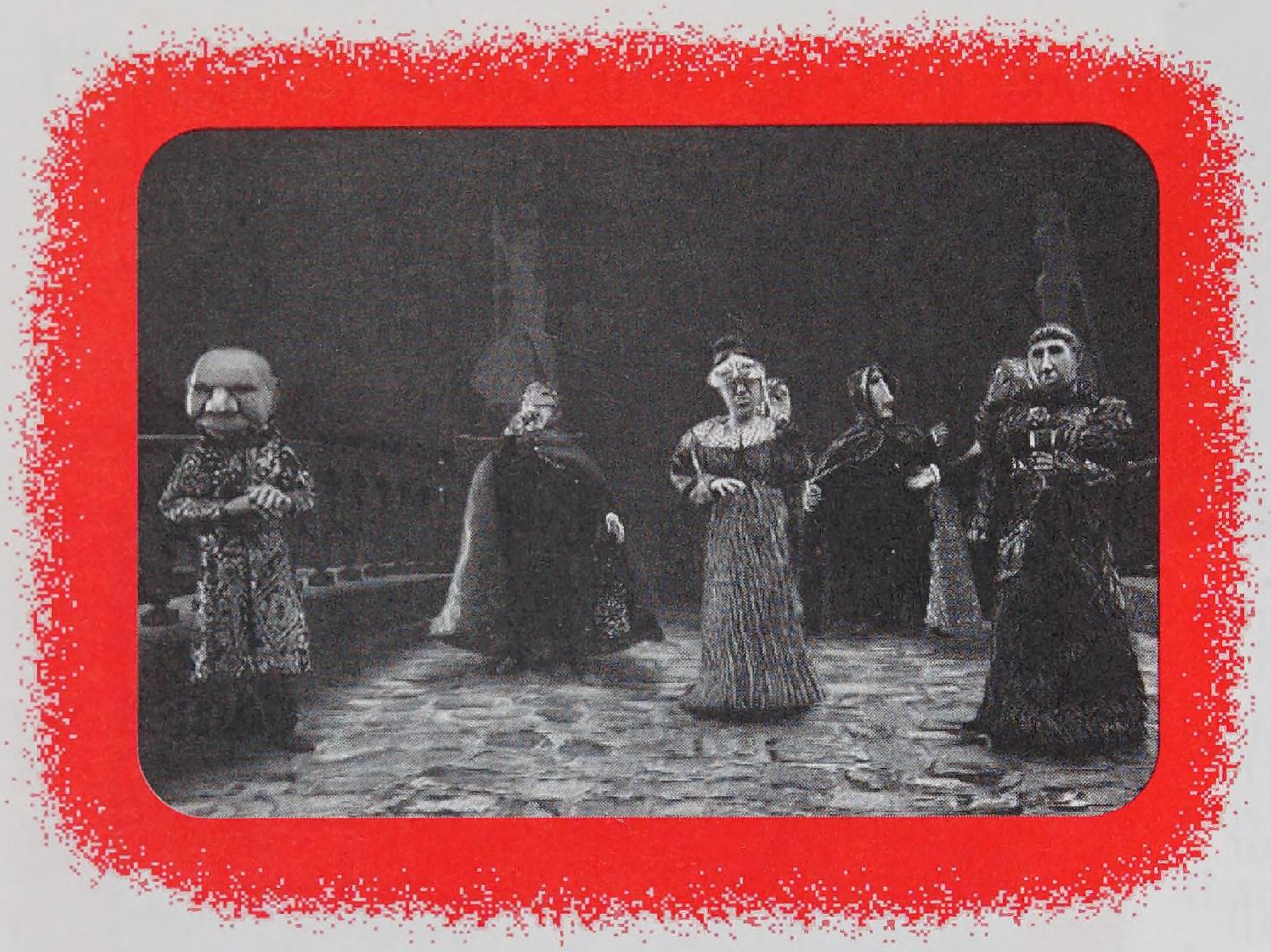
Casually, I stroll down the street and onto the bridge. With supreme nonchalance I approach Fortunato and set forth a smooth greeting, not a hint of animosity in my voice or demeanor. How lovely–he detects nothing but good will.



I move closer and engage him in seemingly idle but enticing conversation. Ha! The bait has been taken. Now I must merely tease . . . tease . . . and float him some additional line.

I turn to Luchesi and approach him, easily engaging him in our banter. How effortlessly they fall into my trap, the horned idiot and the ultimate jester of libation. The pompous fools wouldn't know an Amontillado if it fell like a brick upon their thick skulls. I turn back to Fortunato, luring him deeper into the sticky entrapment of his own greed. A cask of Amontillado, the most revered and treasured vino in all of Italy, sought, indeed, the world over. He cannot resist such temptation. It is only a matter of time–hours, perhaps minutes–before his curiosity and avidity overtake him. How clever my manipulation.

Now I will go about my business, enjoy the party, ignoring him while my proposition seethes in his brain, his thirst growing like a cancer in his bowels.



Let's see. Who amongst his beholding acquaintances–I hesitate to say "friends"–shall I dally with first? Ah, Desdemona. I approach her sinuously and nod a greeting most coy. I feel Fortunato's eyes upon me as Desdemona looks me over and, of course, admires my lithe frame and the handsome contours of my disguised face. Even in her intoxicated condition the wench recognizes her past prey. Perhaps later . . .

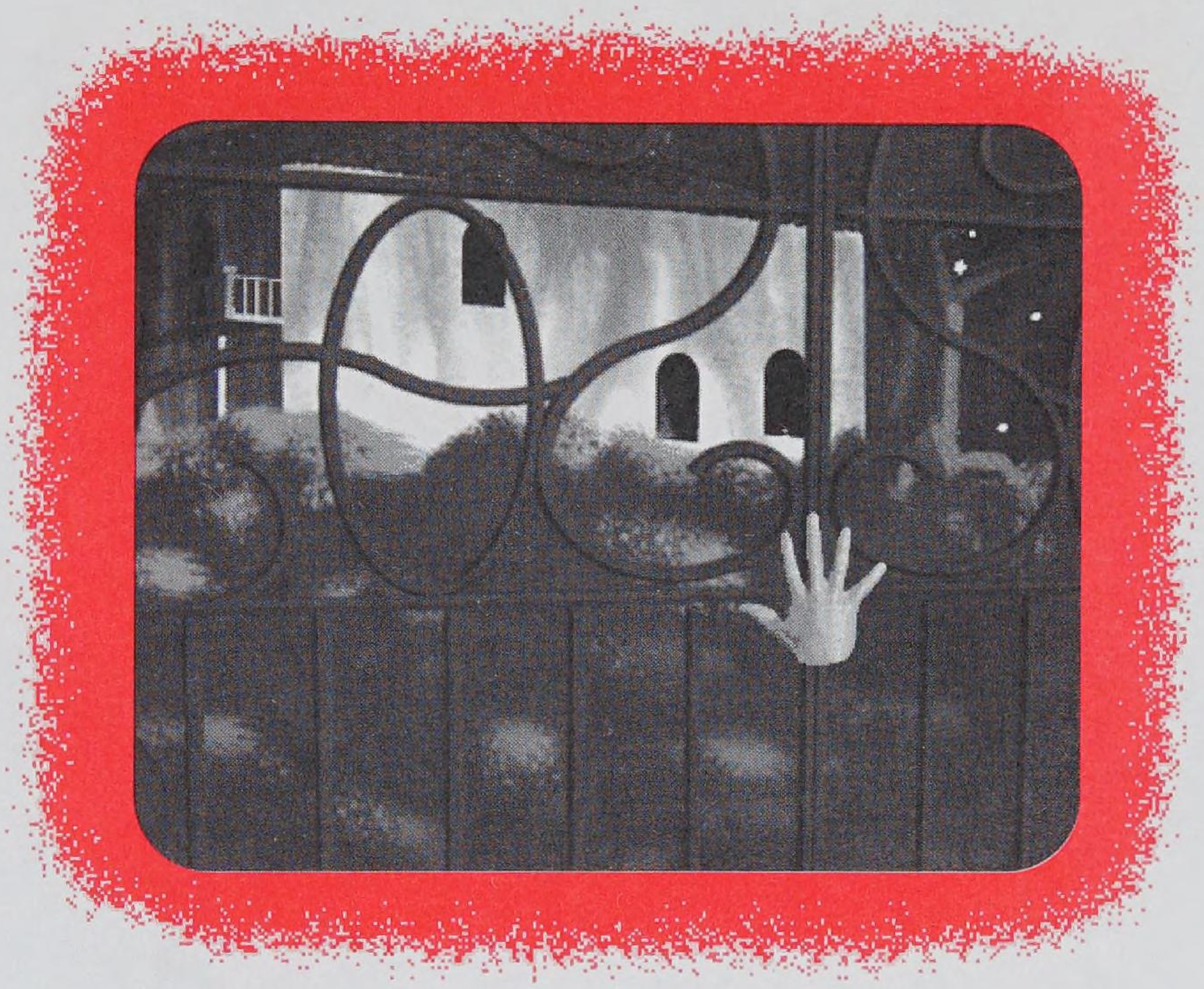
I cross the bridge, passing the giggling woman (who is that?) and stand near the Sycophant. Ha! He knows me not! I've no desire to make my acquaintance with this lowly creature, the adulator of my sworn enemy. It does occur to me, however, that Fortunato may have met his match in this slithering, calculating marauder.

I turn back and approach the comely young woman standing at the center of the bridge. Her cheerful countenance prickles my interest and my irritation. She removes her mask so that I might see her face: silly Emilia–ever on the prowl. I nod in passing, not wishing to engage her in meaningless conversation nor to pique her interest in me. Tonight, I have no interest in such trifles; for tonight vengence is mine.

Certain that Fortunato's gaze is upon me, I turn my back on the carnival and stroll toward the street. I pause at the edge of the bridge, knowing full well his intent. He'll not allow me to leave without him. He'll not forego his once in a lifetime opportunity to whet his palate with the divine Amontillado.

As I expected, he agrees to accompany me to my villa. I turn back to face the foolish Fortunato, so easily lured into my trap, I can hardly hide my delight. But I do, oh I do, so long have I anticipated and planned for this moment. Together we leave the celebration, walking forward over the bridge.

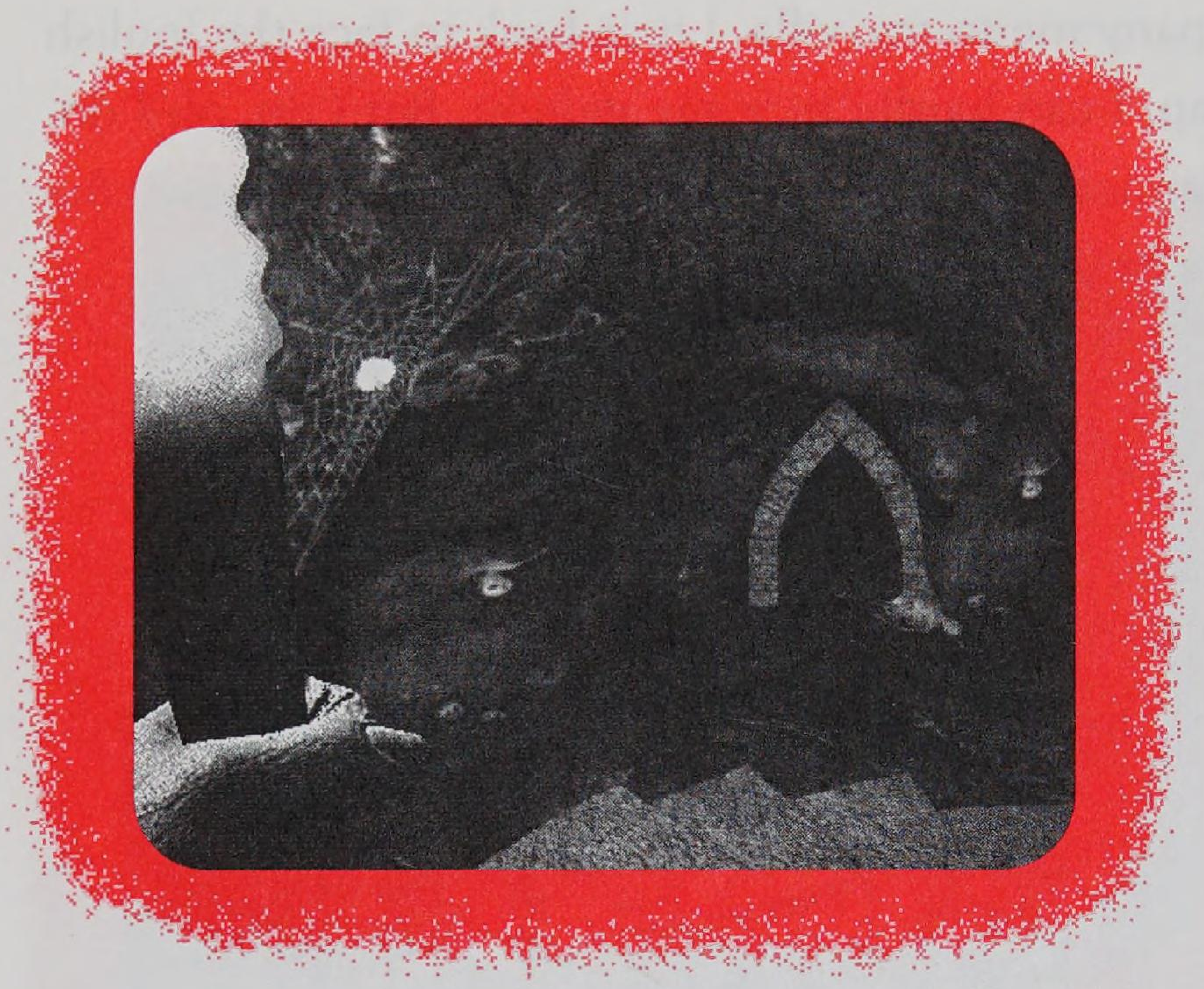
. . .



It is a long walk to my villa, and Fortunato grows nervous as darkness falls. I easily assuage him with my reassurances of the awaiting Amontillado and the relative safety of my villa. At last we arrive at the gates to the Montresor villa, constructed by my ancestors' own hands. My chest wells with pride as I open the gate and let in my most unwelcome guest.

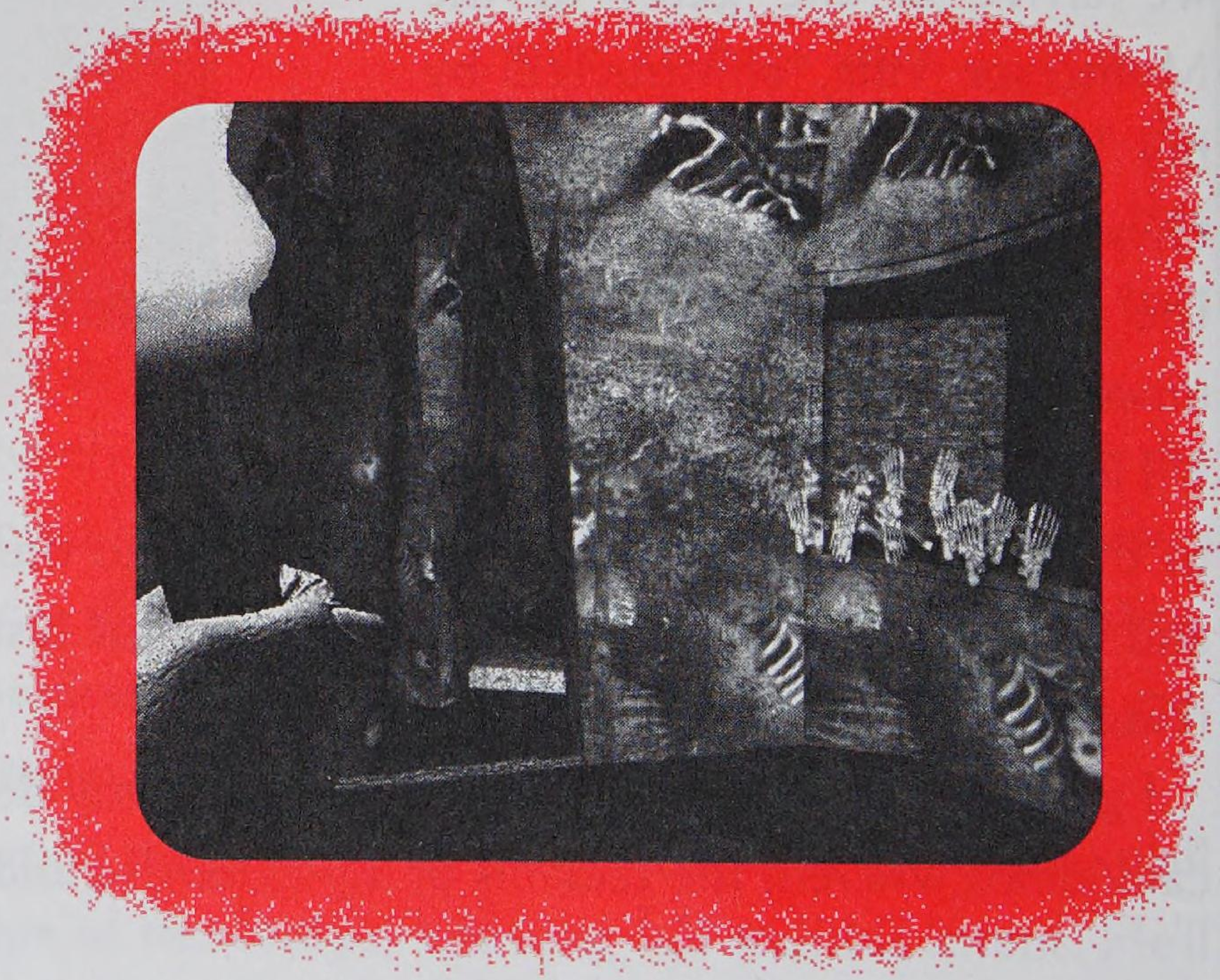
I lead Fortunato to the entrance to the vault and open the door. As we step into the dark chambers, I can smell his fear and feel the tension rising in his body. But his lust for the Amontillado overrides his reason, as I knew it would.

I grab the torch from the sconce and guide my degenerate companion down into the catacombs wherein the remains of my extensive and distinguished lineage resides.

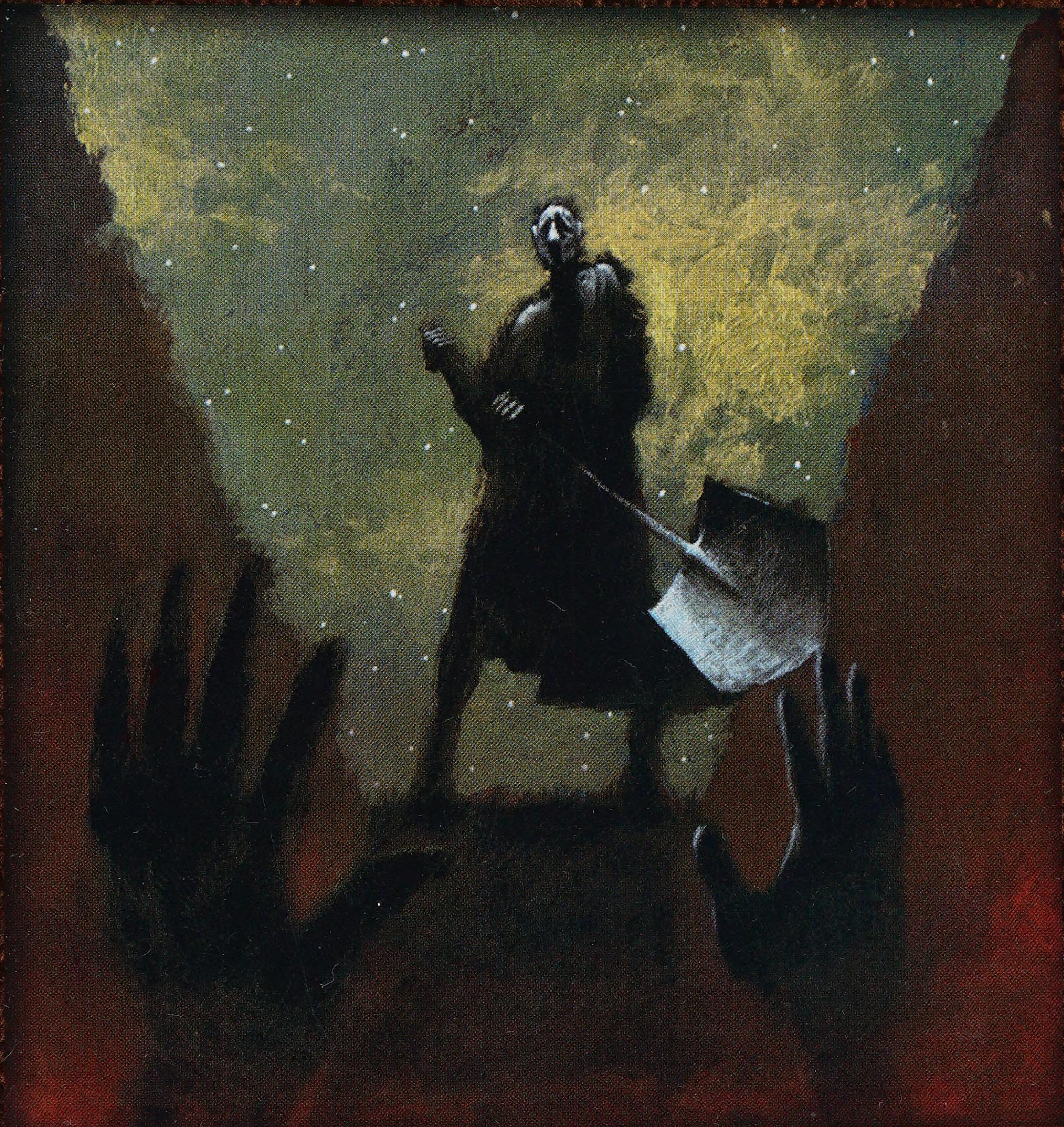


As we descend into the dark and dank chambers, I playfully nudge a moth caught in a spider web. Like my adversary, the fluttering creature has become hopelessly, endlessly ensnared. I simply cast my silky thread–the Amontillado–leading him ever so stealthily to the devil's den, where he surely belongs.

Come this way, Fortunato, I gesture to the right, proceeding up a series of stone steps. His hacking pulmonary affliction unsettles my nerves somewhat, but I plod on, feigning concern for his discomfort.

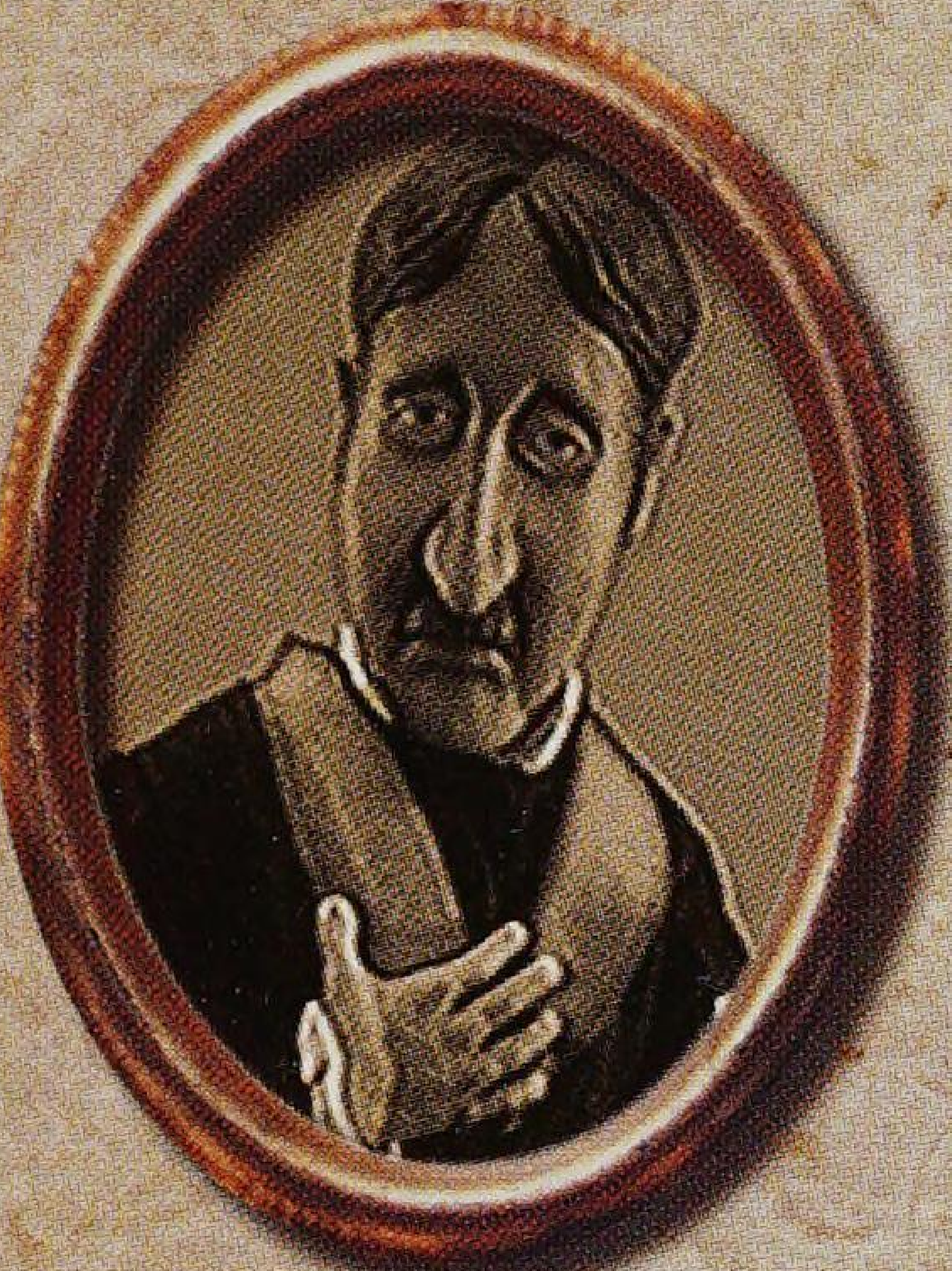


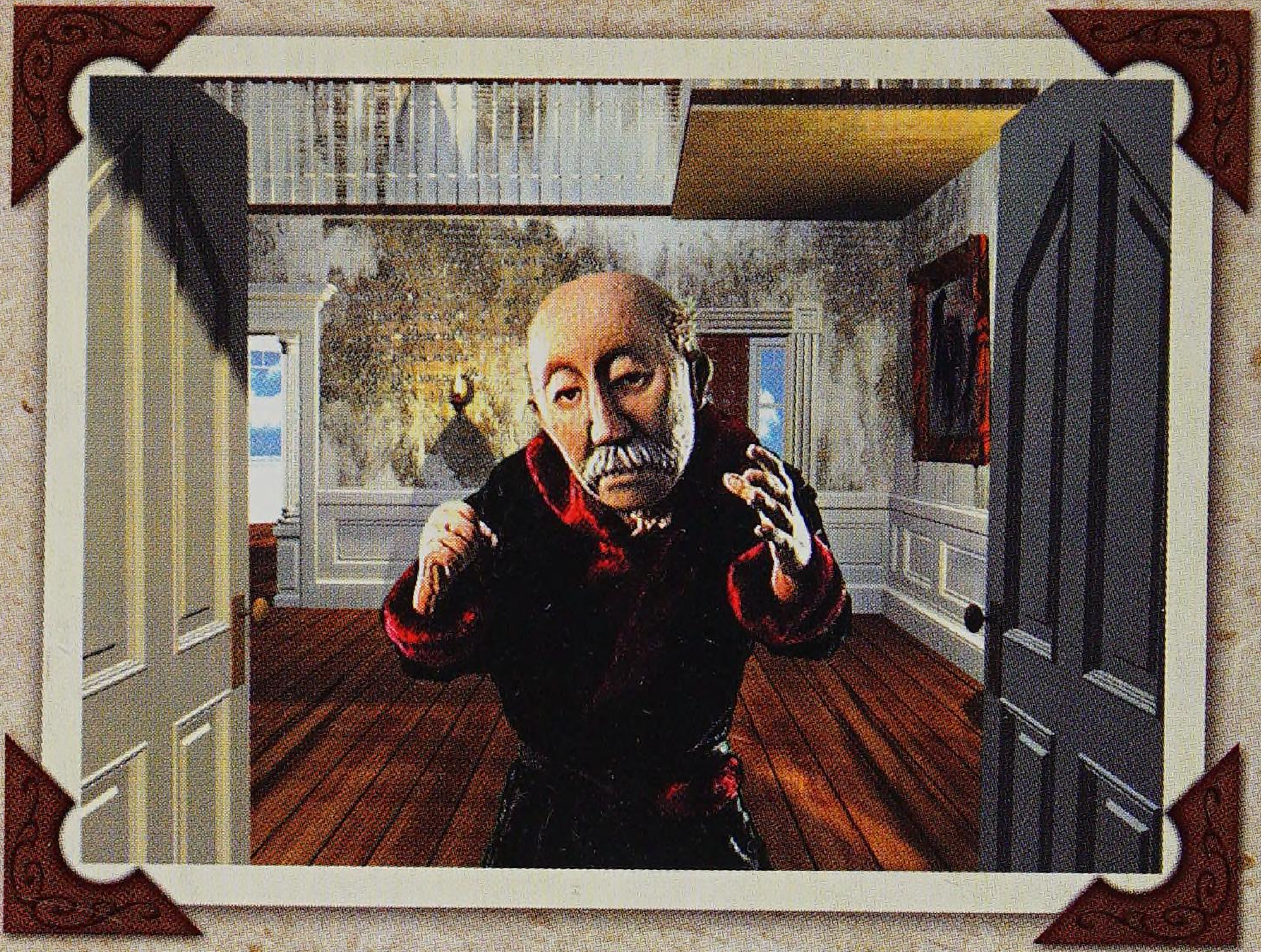
The eager buffoon readily follows, blind with avarice, as we pass a crypt encasing several of my deceased kin. Their innocent skeletons lie side-by-side, belying the incestuous tragedy that led to their untimely and sudden demise. If you were to peer closely inside their tomb, you would see their skulls neatly bashed. Revenge courses through my blood as naturally as my refined masonry skills–my blood-born inheritance, so to speak.



The Dark Eye Family Album

Henry. At long last, my rapscallion brother discovers his heart's desire and determines to settle down . . . whilst Fate allows.

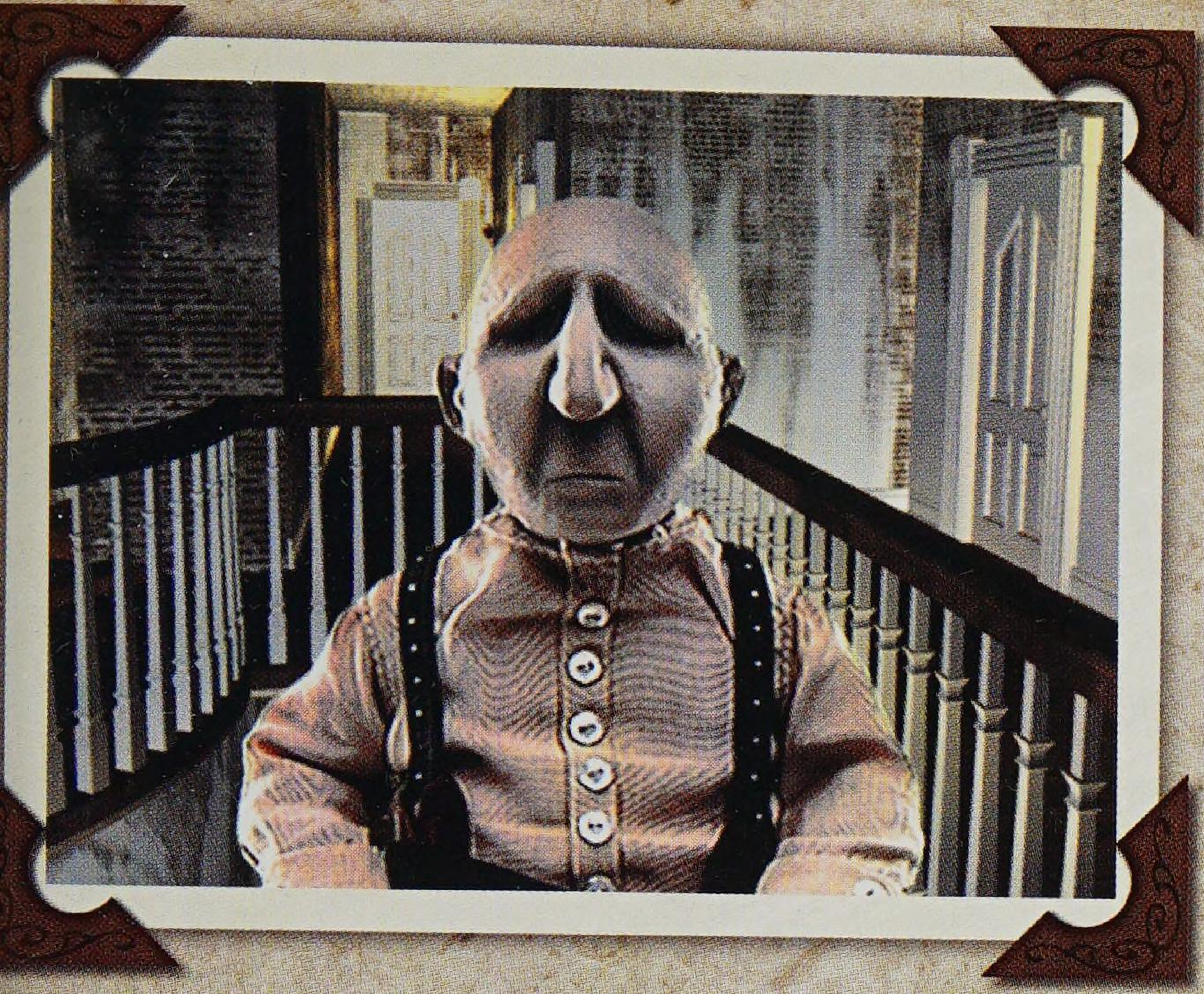




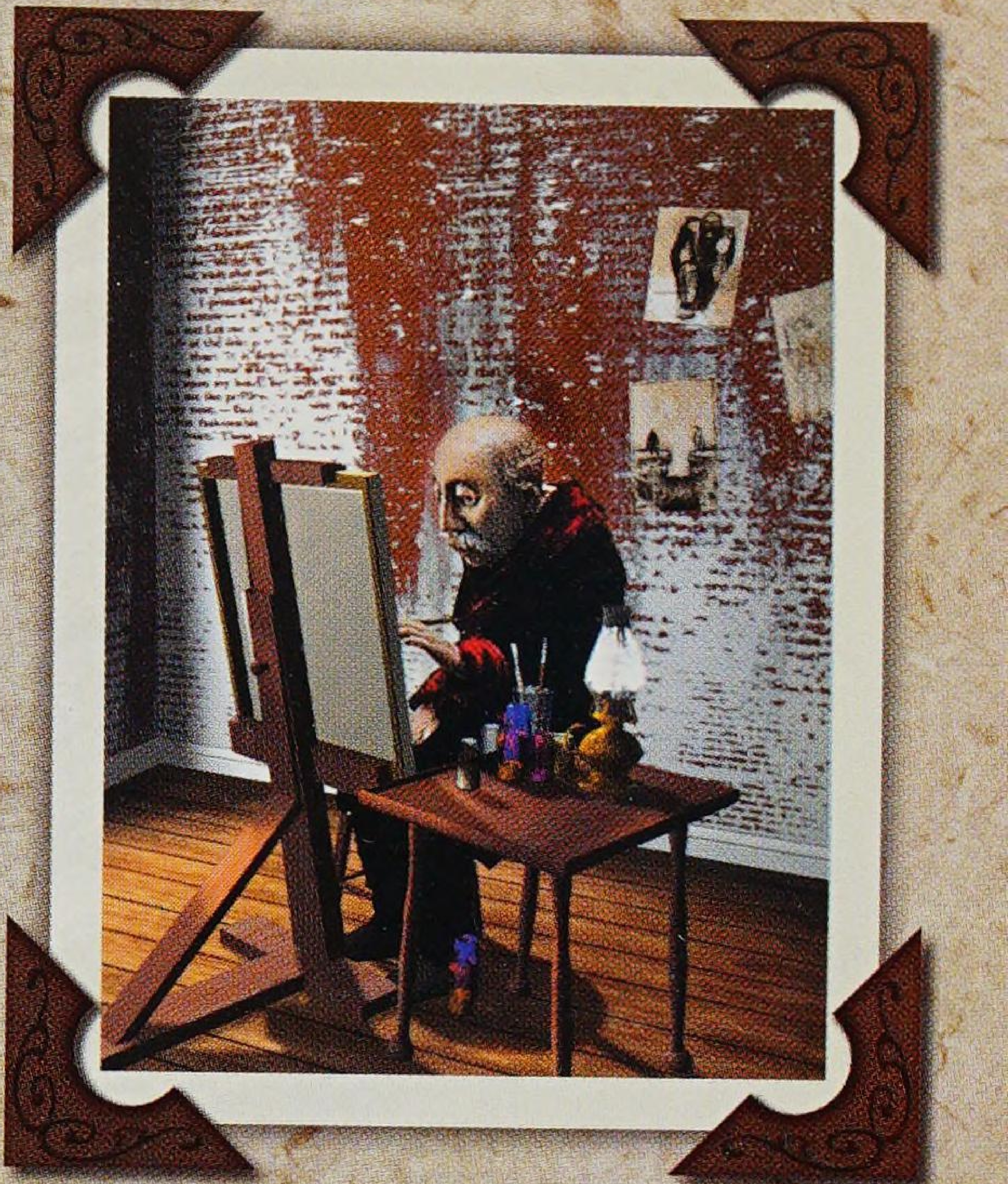
Cousin Edwin. The consummate host to murder!

The serene grandeur of Edwin's mansion belies the malevolence that dwells within.

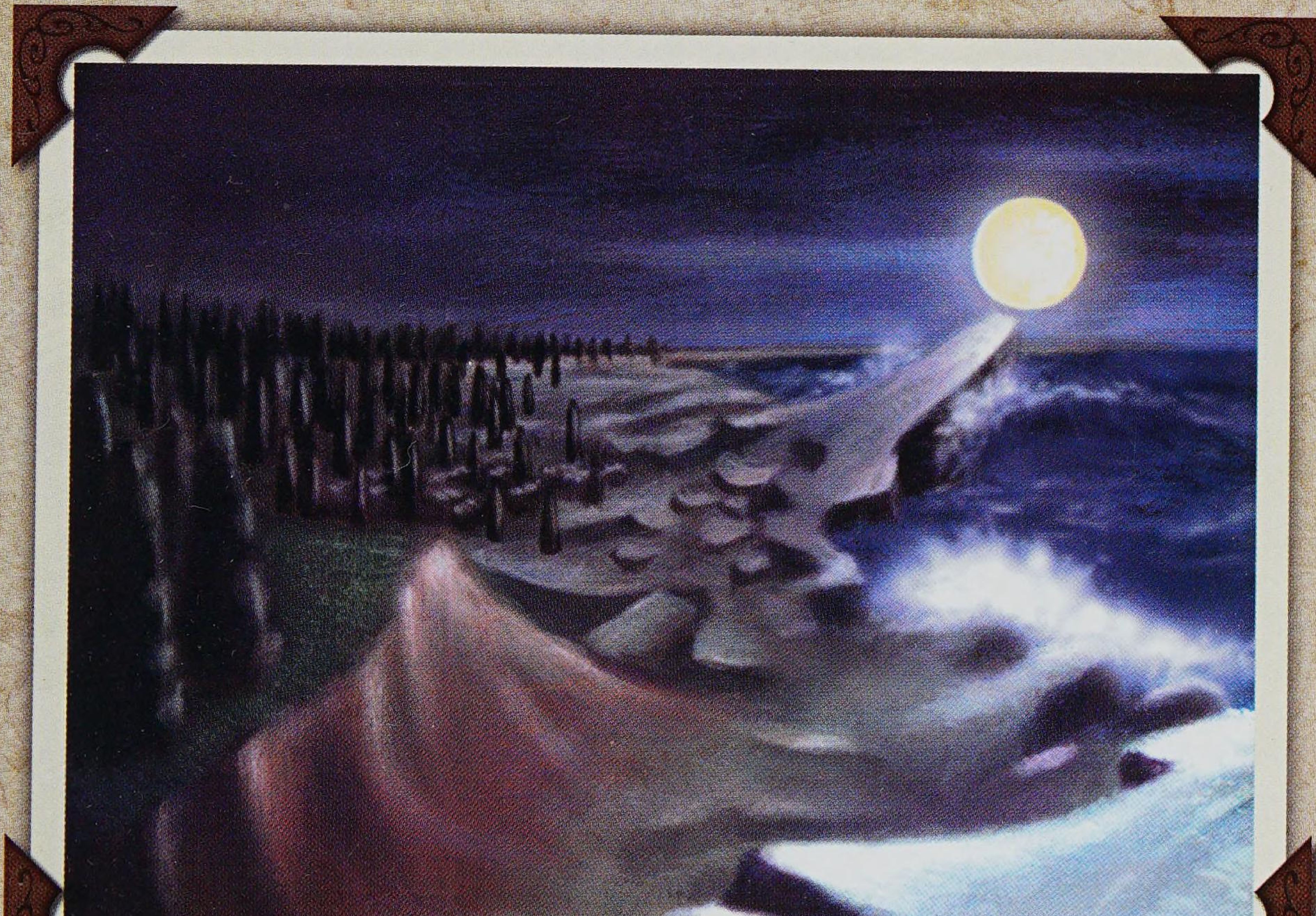
Elise. My fair cousin at the dawn of her emerging womanhood and tragic demise.



Ambers—the enigmatic deputy of doom. My soul shuddered the moment I first laid eyes upon him.



Hour after endless hour, day after countless day, Edwin labors at his paintings. Is it that he is consumed by his work or does his work consume him?

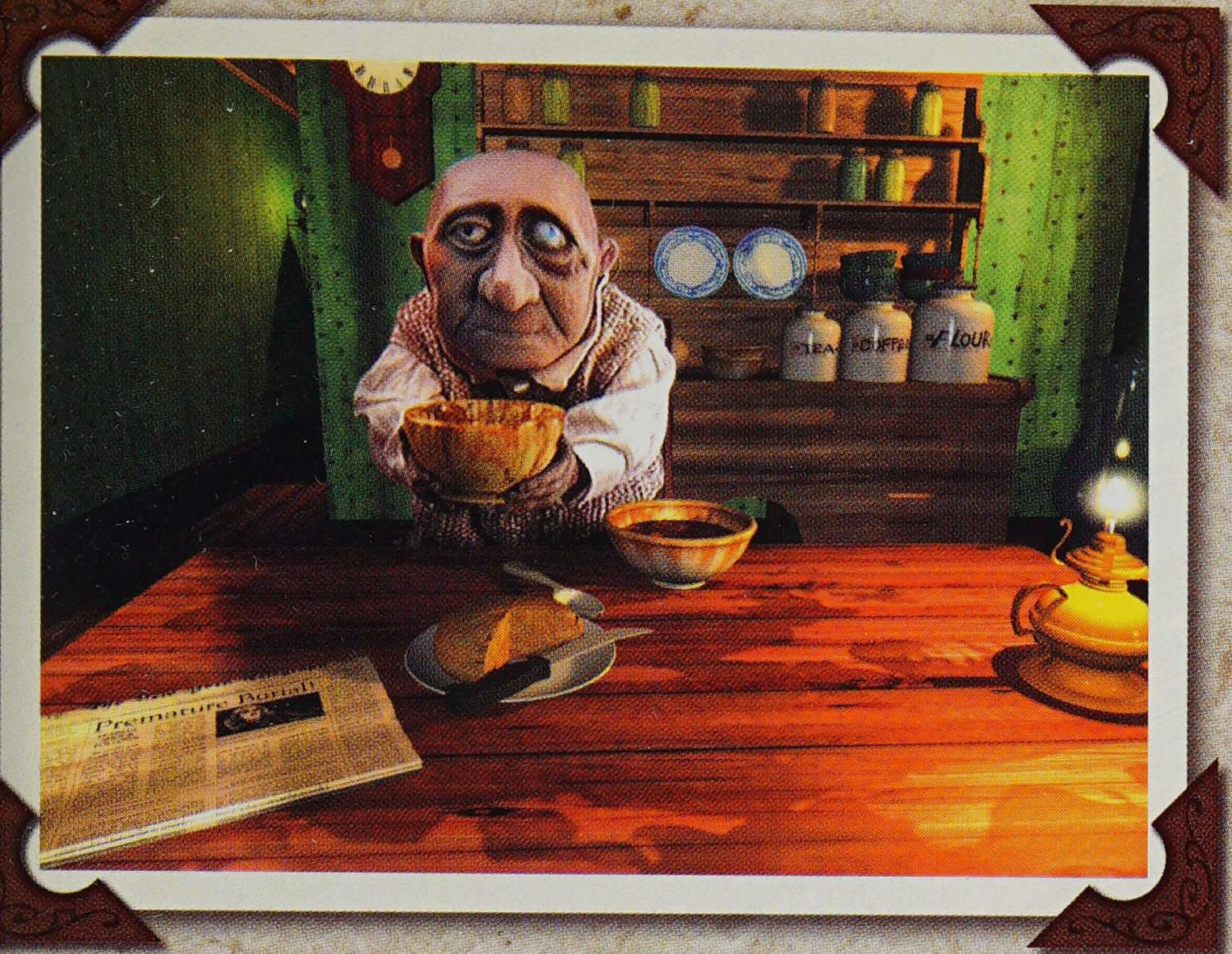


Haunted . . . I am haunted still and always . . . by the savage beauty of the moonlit surf crashing against the treacherous bluff that once harbored and now entombs my ill-fated relation.

Just as the barren nursery tore from the bosom of Edwin's mansion and fell into the sea, so too are the inhabitants of this household destined to fall from grace.

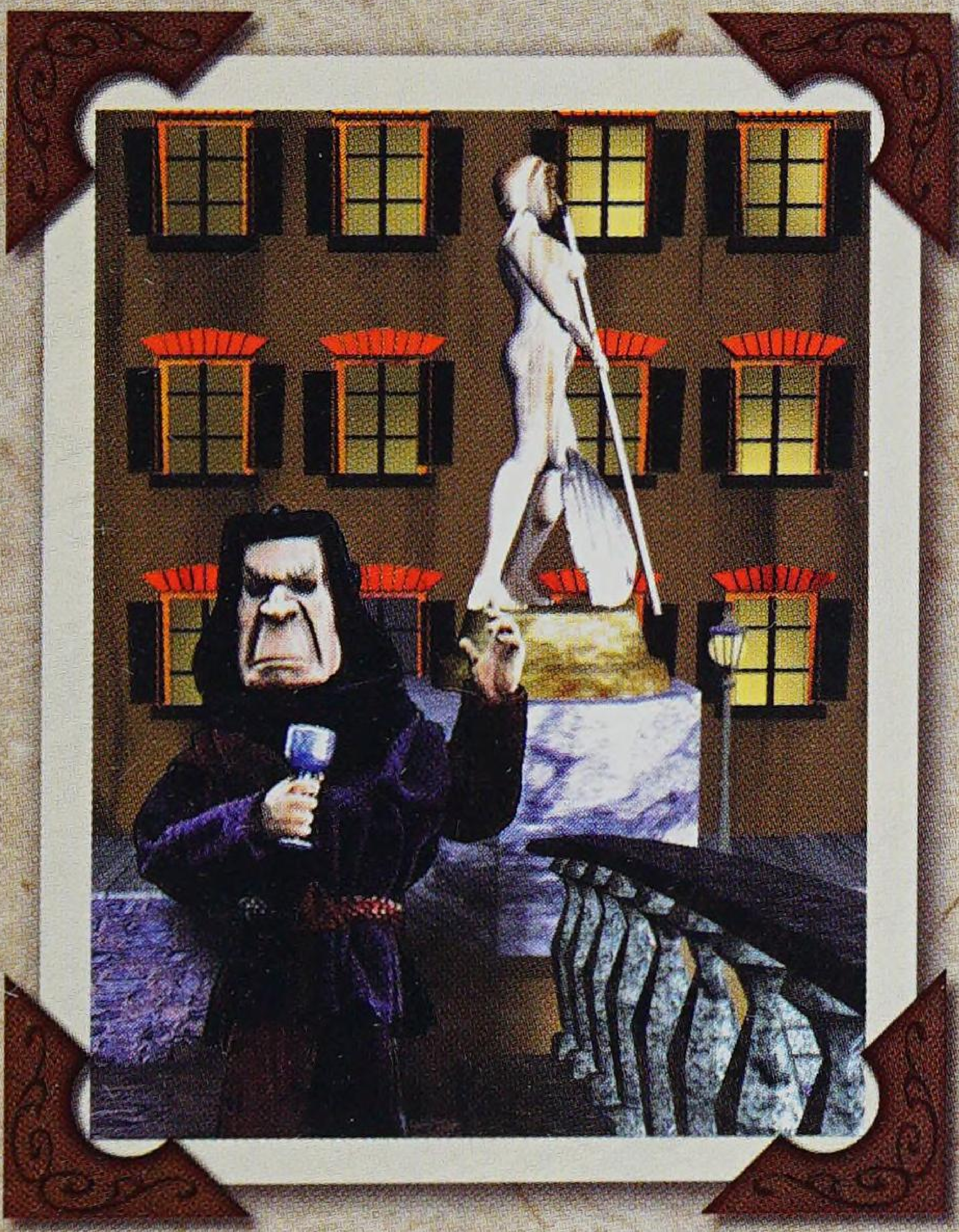
Egaeus. Tortured by persistent ruminations of the afflictions that ravage his repugnant betrothed and his own twisted psyche.

Fortunato. His insatiable thirst for Amontillado proves no match for Montresor's craving for revenge.



The Old Man. Let not his gruesome appearance disguise his tell-tale heart of gold. He graciously shares his paltry accommodations with his most ungrateful guest.

Berenice . . . Berenice . . . The mere mention of her name conjures visions of the once lovely and sprite Berenice, now despoilt by an insidious ailment.



Luchesi—a devil of a wine connoisseur. This pompous cretin unwittingly facilitates the untimely demise of his partner in greed, Fortunato.

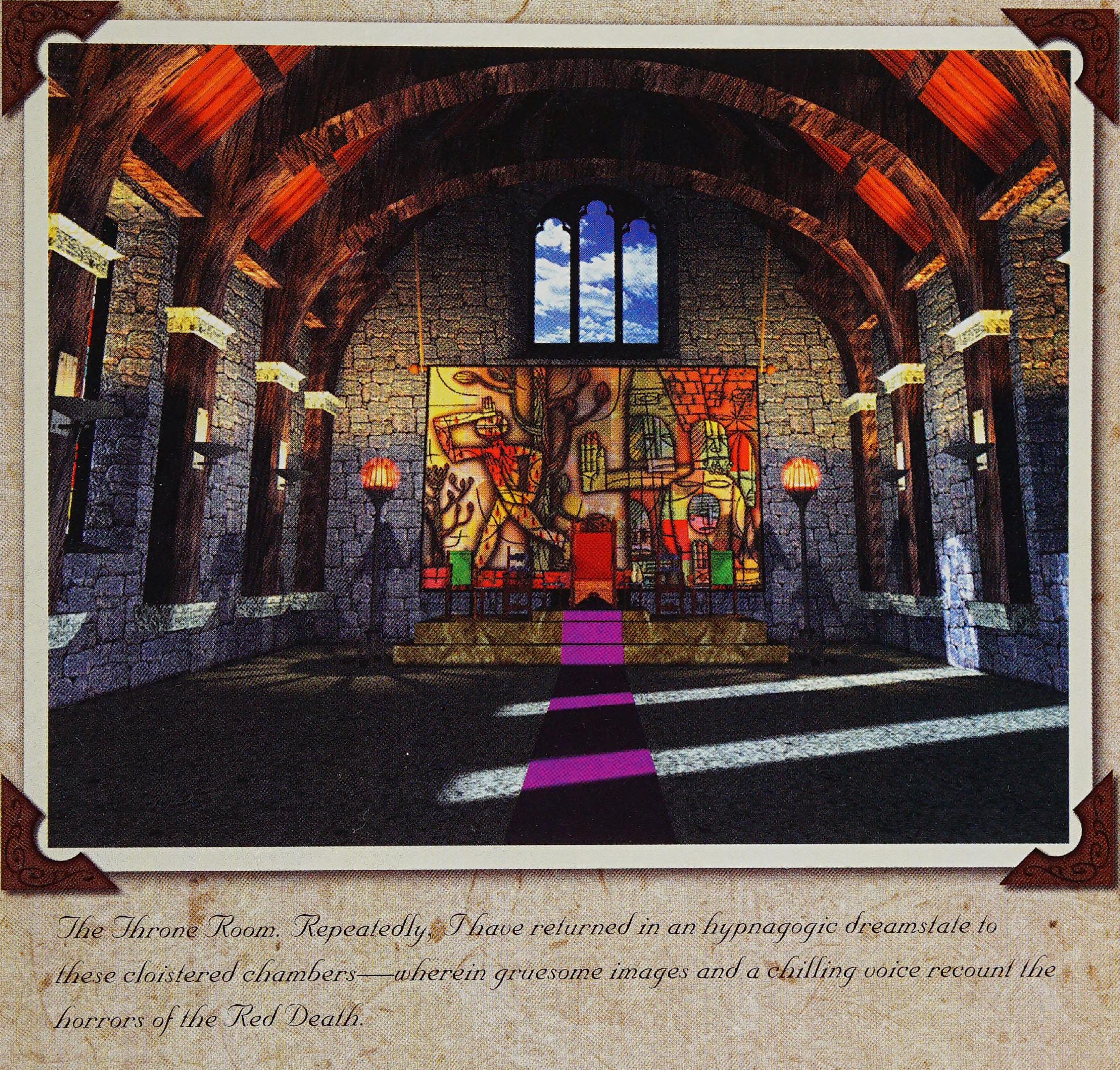
A triumvirate of peacekeepers arrive at the humble abode of the Old Man—alas, too late! but nonetheless, shattering the calm facade of his murderous Boarder.

My dear Cousin Elise invites me to accompany her maudlin aria. Her sweet song does little to soothe her bleeding heart and mine.

The Old Man's Boarder occupies much of his time sketching the objects of his obsessions.

The Boarder. What pernicious tragedy befell this stately patrician, casting him into madness and his resentful tenancy in the Old Man's plebeian home?

Whom but the most hedonistic and avaricious wine-monger would journey through the corridors of Hell for a swallow of Amontillado?



The Throne Room. Repeatedly, I have returned in an hypnagogic dreamstate to these cloistered chambers—wherein gruesome images and a chilling voice recount the horrors of the Red Death.

No starving beggar, no harried servant, no worried wife can deter Montresor from his vindictive mission.

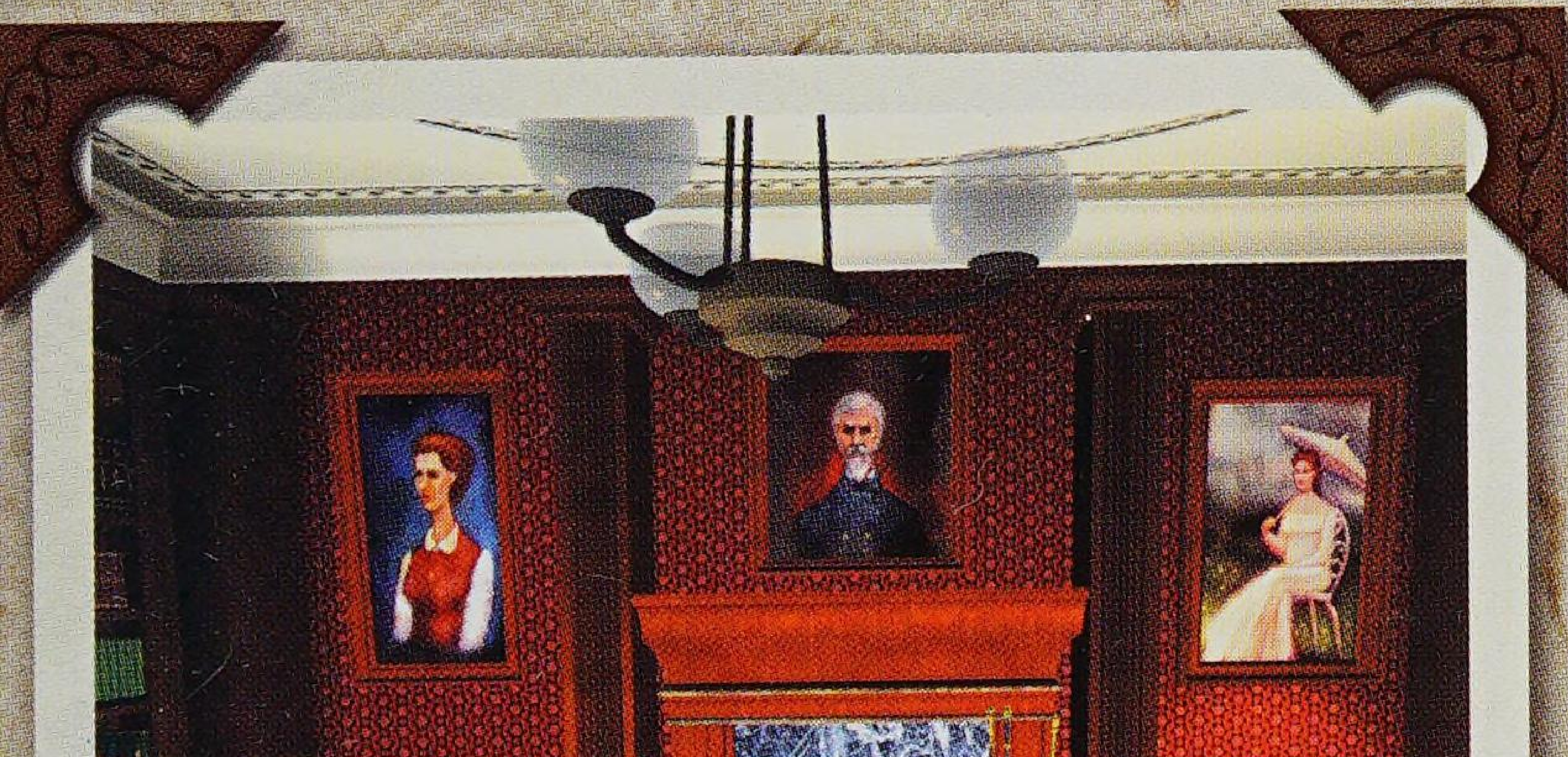
Emilia—so coy, so cunning. Montresor would be wise to avenge with discretion—if he, indeed, intends to punish with impunity.

Fortunato—rich and reviled. Soon shall he look in disbelieving horror upon the mollified face of his avenger.

Sycophant. Only a fool would place his confidence in this sniveling,

Myriad beholding guests regale at Fortunato's carni-

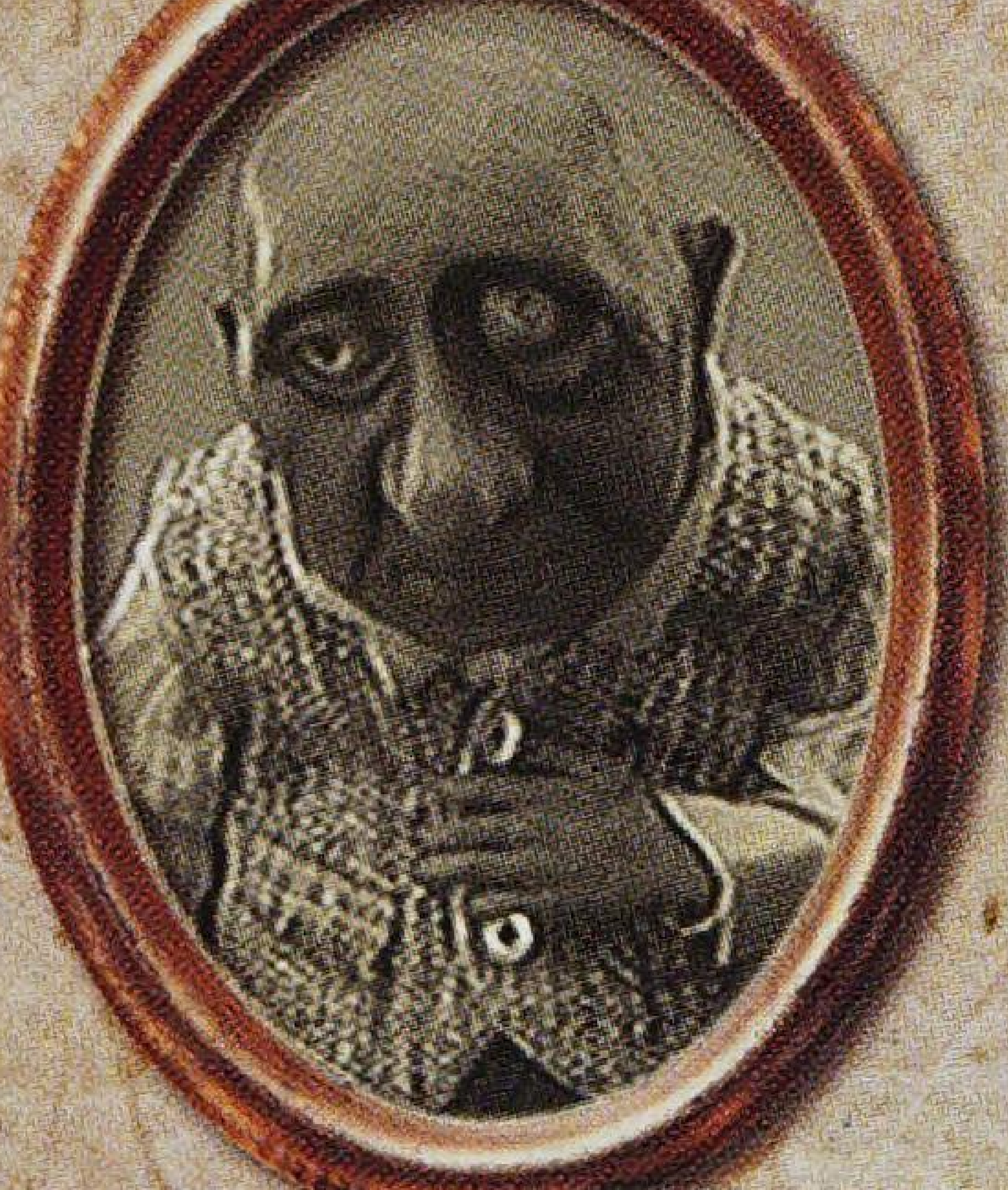
Eyes are the window to the soul. Pray, what doth that portend for the poor soul of Elise—who, buried alive, plucked out her own eyes?



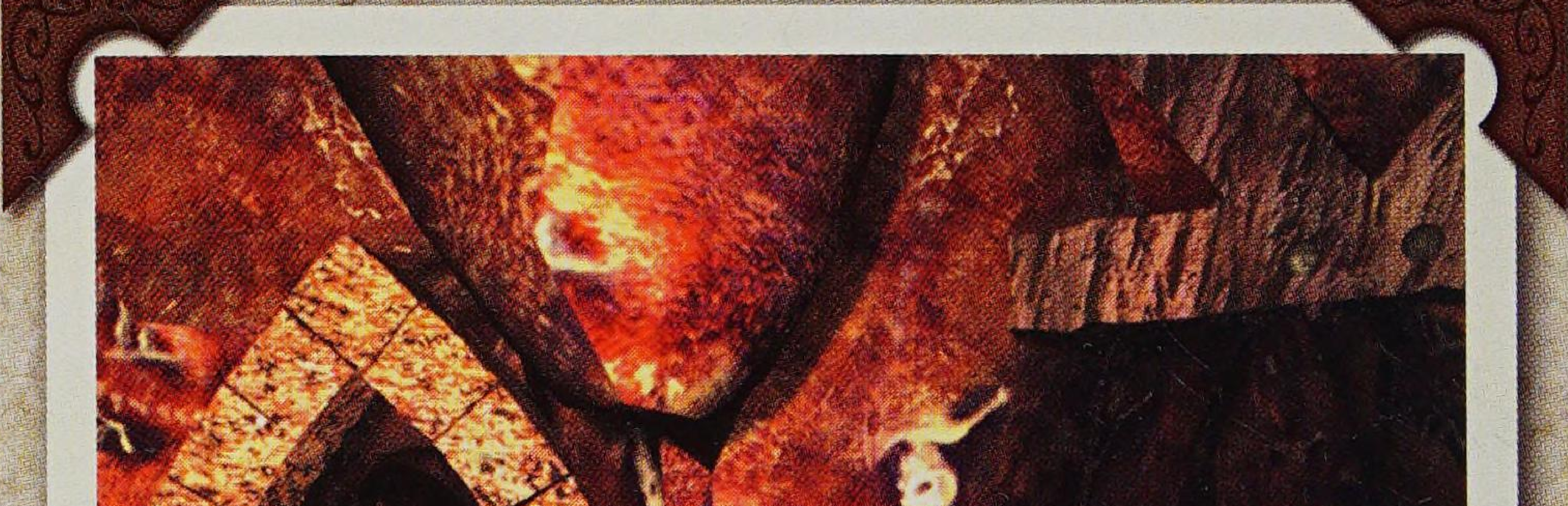
The monastic asylum of Egaeus, wherein the spirits of his sadistic ancestors haunt his every waking hour.

Montresor. The debonair but deadly epicurean of the grape . . . and mason of malice.

Berenice—how barren those eyes, how exquisite those teeth. The lovelorn lady timidly approaches her cousin and nemesis, the eternally preoccupied Egaeus.



The Old Man. So blindly carefree is the life of a gentle soul in the twilight of his years.



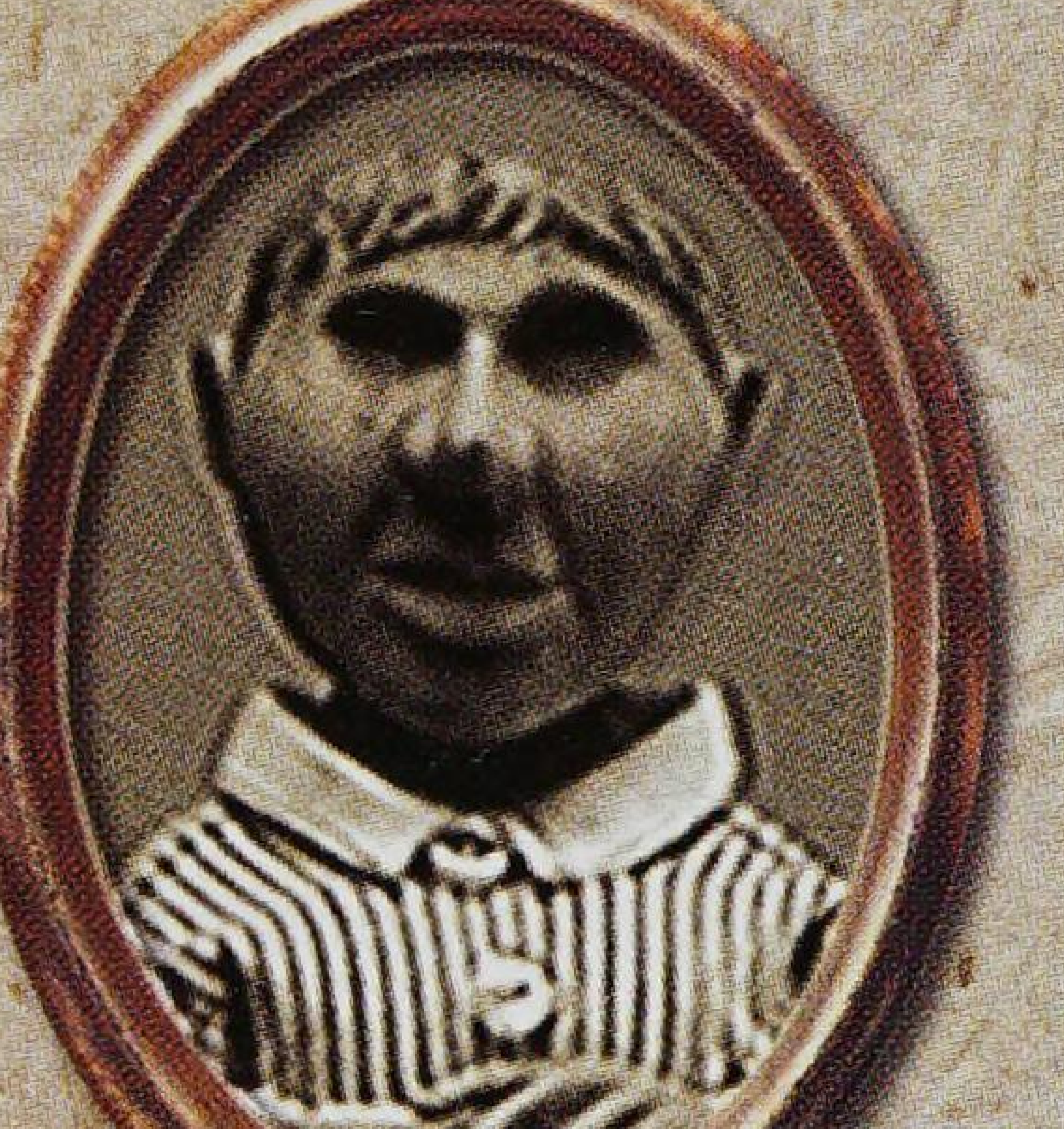
The final resting place of the members of the Montresor family. Choose your passage carefully, lest you follow the path to purgator

atherine inquires about the health of her beloved Berenice. o time like the present to seal your romantic destiny.

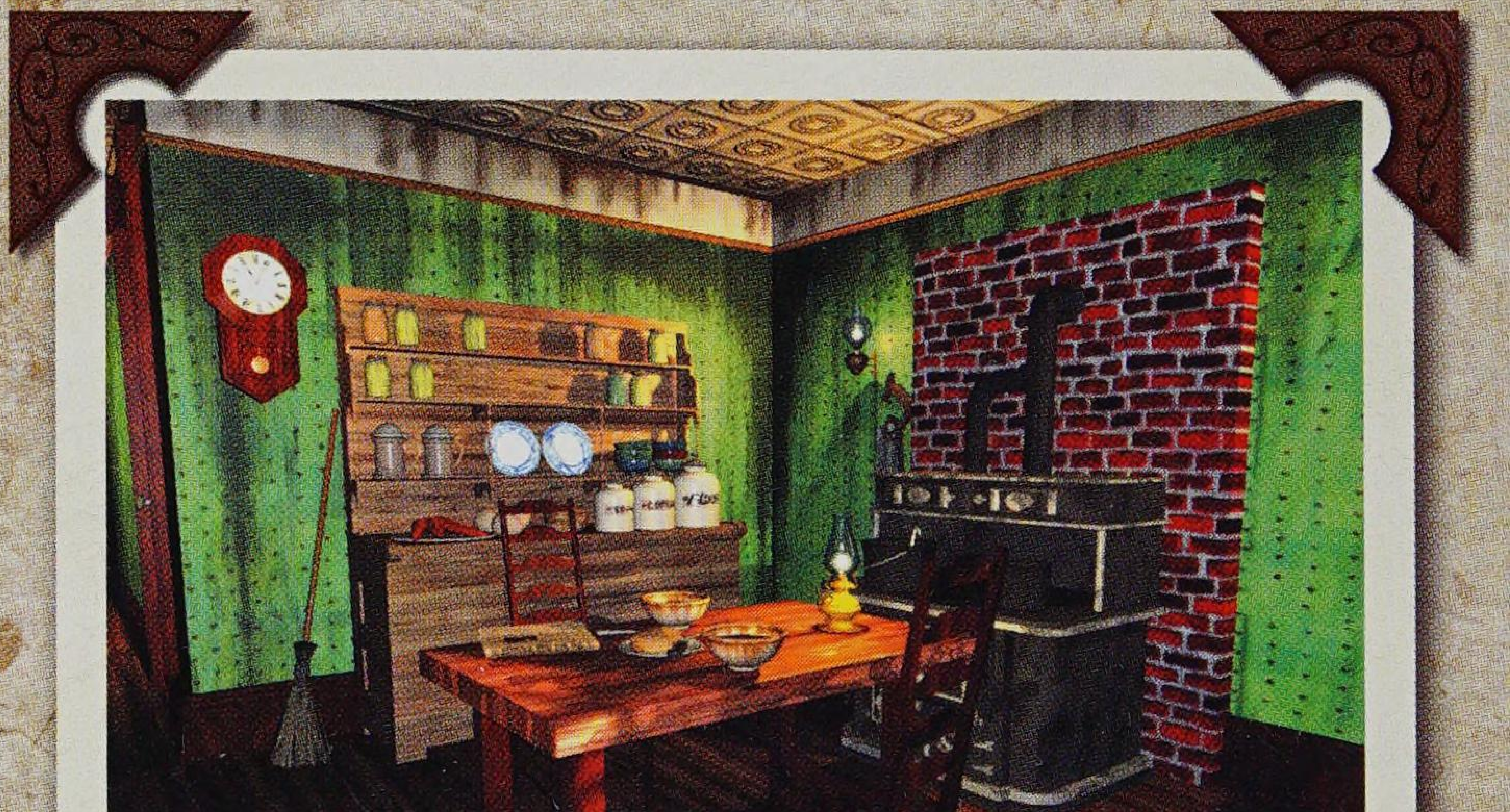
Desdemona. Beware this vixen who wishes you well, for her intentions may not be abreast.

That which provokes us makes us stronger. That which vexes the Boarder drives him to brilliantly devastating madness.

Seeking to quell his dementia, Egaeus vows his evil devotion to the woman he detests, the sickly Berenice. A smile is the best medicine for ill-fated lovers.

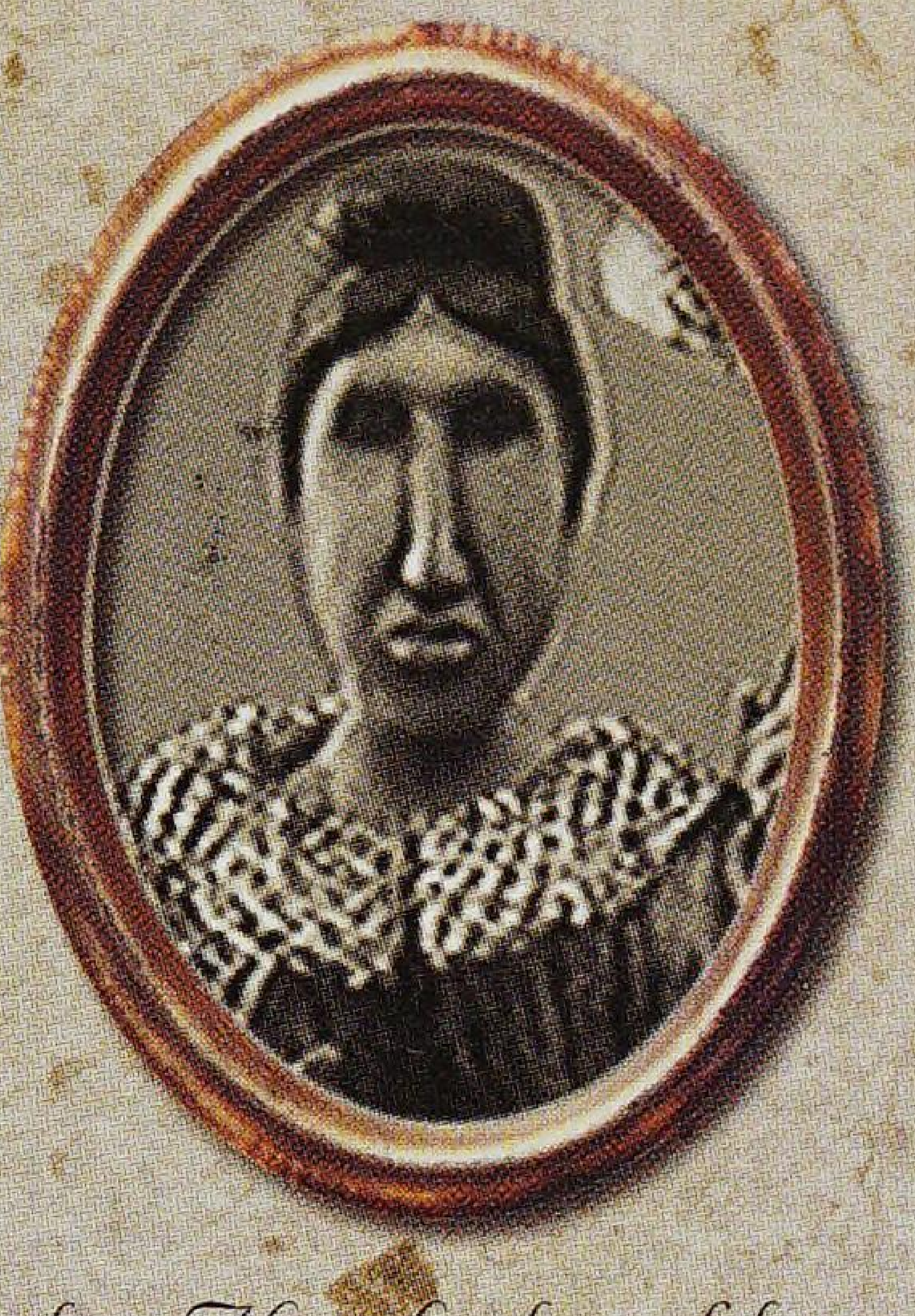


Katherine, Berenice's doting handmaiden—until death or dismemberment do them part.



The pleasant comfort and warmth of the Old Man's modest abode invites kinship. But be warned—all who enter are not of benevolent intent.

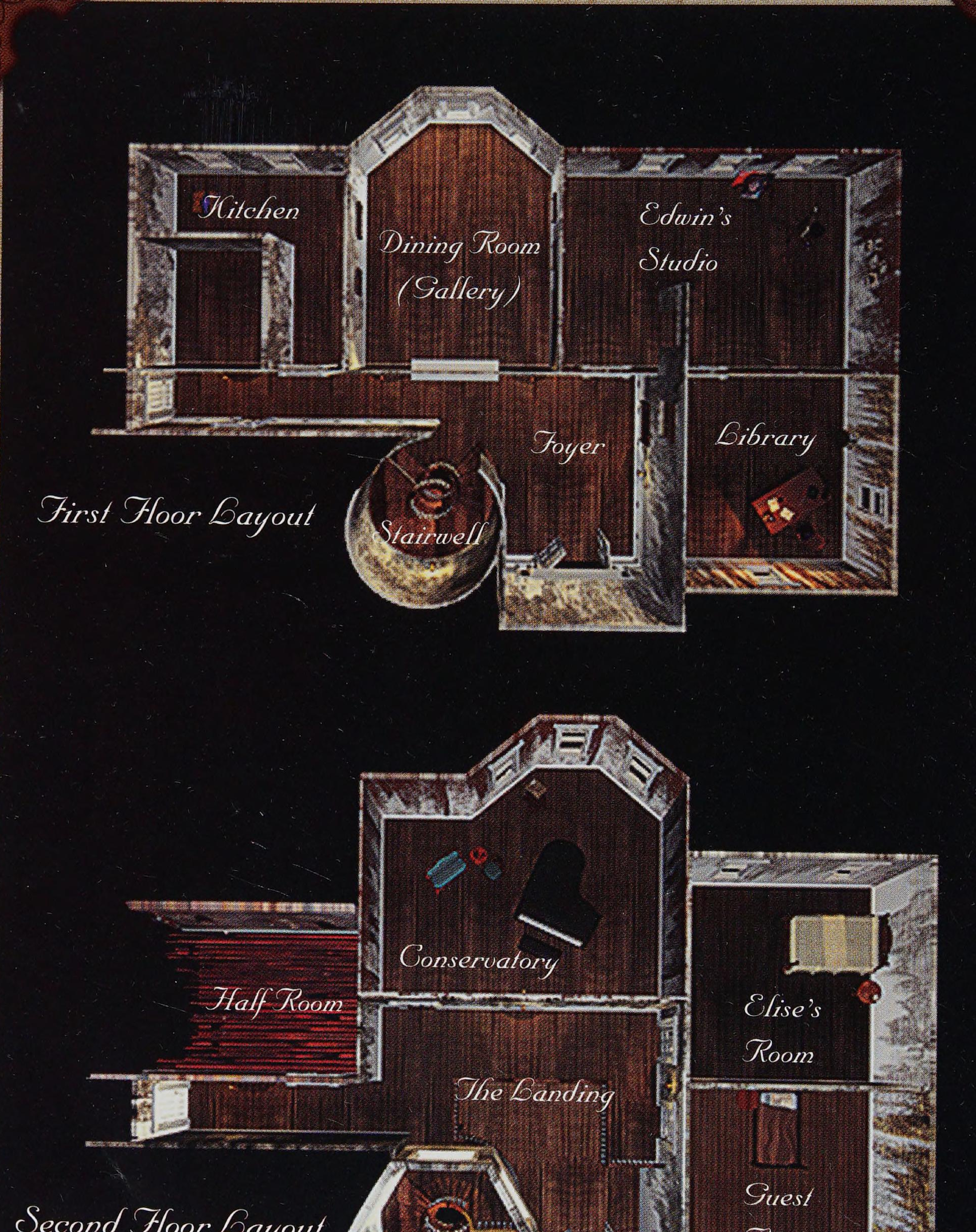
The wise man keeps vigil with one eye open, for as the sky grows dark, terror approaches.

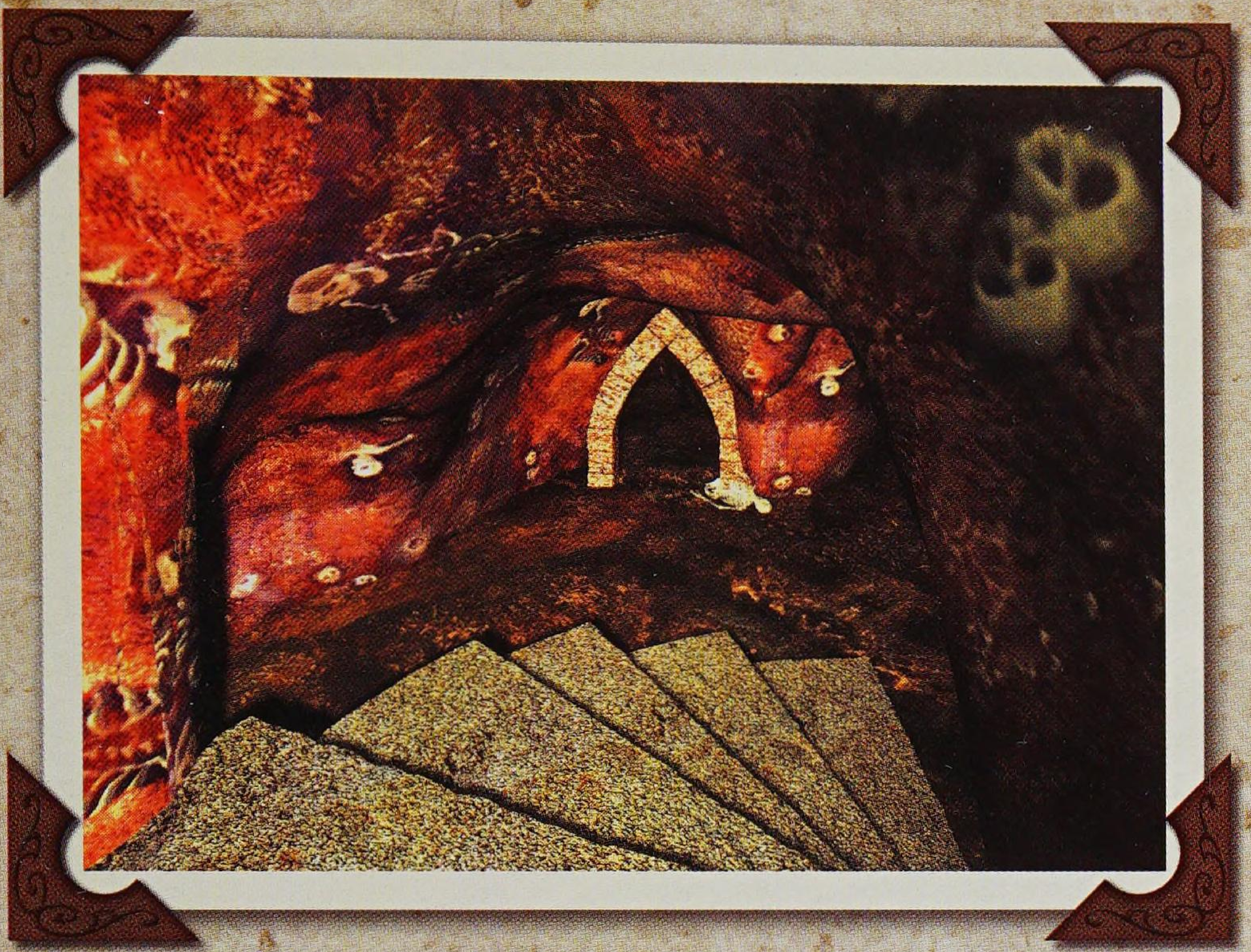


Emilia. The shadow of laughter often hides the worst of intentions.

Despite the capriciousness of Berenice's idyllic sanctum, it becomes dreadfully clear why the caged bird swoons.

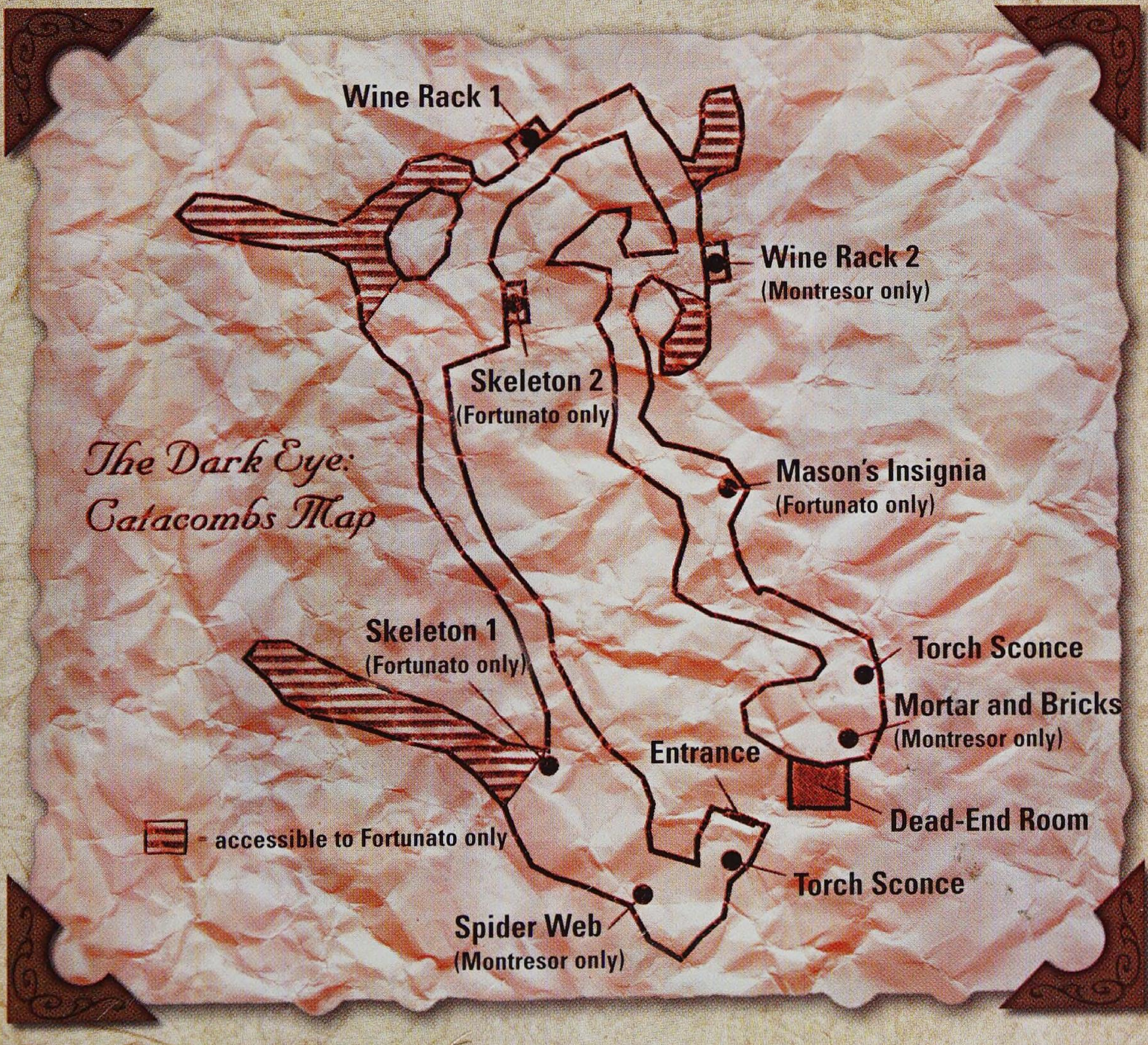
Malevolence Mansion


Kitchen
Dining Room (Gallery)
Edwin's Studio
Foyer
Library
First Floor Layout
Stairwell
Conservatory
Half Room
Elise's Room
The Landing
Second Floor Layout
Guest Room

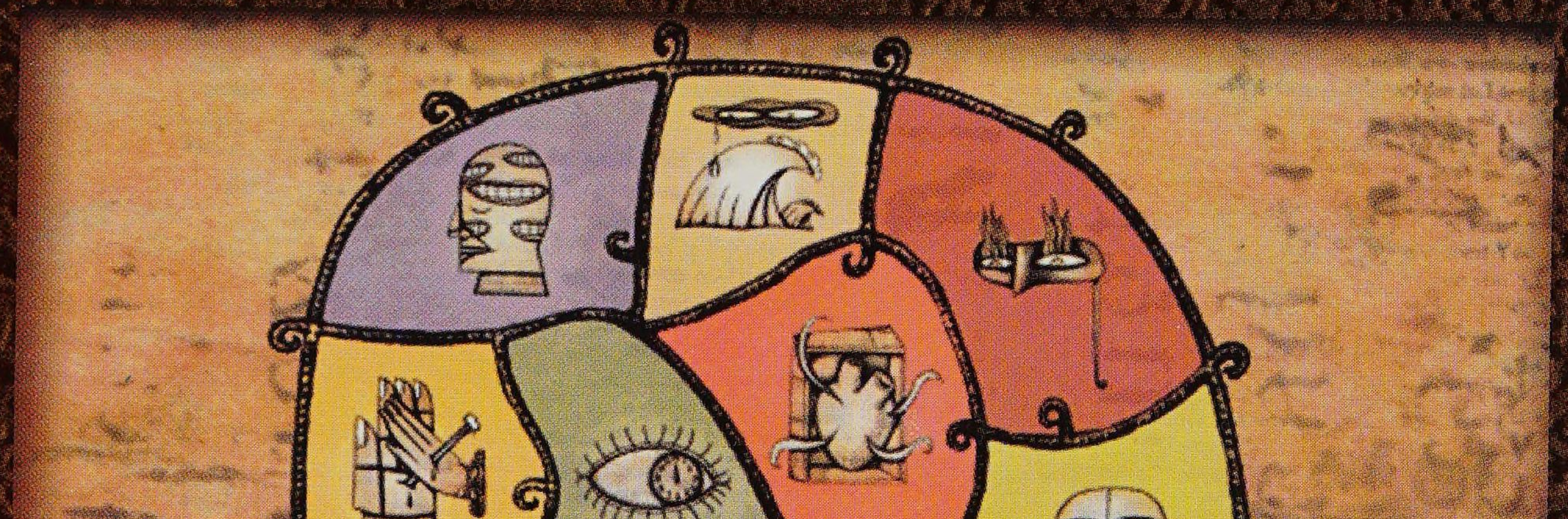


Descent is the easy part of the journey through Montresor's catacombs. Turn back now . . .or never.

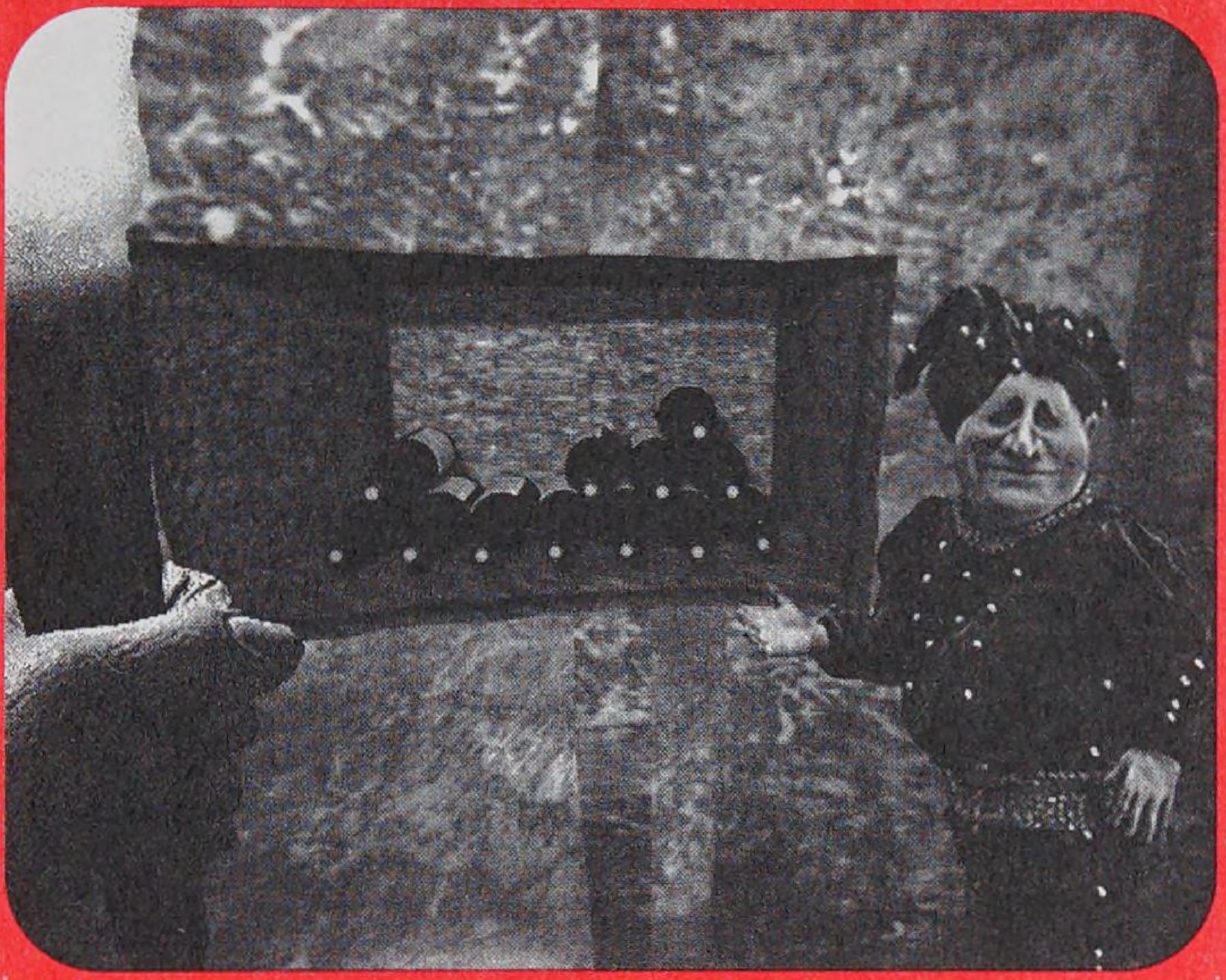
Map to the Catacombs of the Villa Montresor


Wine Rack 1
Wine Rack 2
(Montresor only)
Skeleton 2
(Fortunato only)
The Dark Eye: Catacombs Map
Mason's Insignia
(Fortunato only)
Skeleton 1
(Fortunato only)
Torch Sconce
Mortar and Bricks
(Montresor only)
Entrance
Dead-End Room
▨ - accessible to Fortunato only
Torch Sconce
Spider Web
(Montresor only)

The Dark Eye Phrenology Map



We enter the passage to the left of the crypt and approach the wine rack. A insatiable smile plays across my face as I, the consummate host, offer my guest an exquisite bottle of wine to quell his cough. So convincing my charade, he detects not a hint of the hatred raging within my soul.



Calm, ever the gentleman, I remove the prized bottle from the wine rack and strike it against the stone wall to crack it open. I hand the delicacy to Fortunato, who voraciously guzzles the extracted and fermented blood of the grape. There now, isn't that better?

With the inebriated jester teetering precariously along, I turn back toward the passage and move forward, continuing our trek through the catacombs. Fortunato shivers as we walk past a crypt on the left.

Fortunato, his incessant cough worsening with each step, hesitates behind me as I pause before the russet-stained wall. No, it is not a dead end . . . not yet. What is the matter with Fortunato? Is he getting cold feet? I must summon my mastery of psychology to lure him deeper into the viscera of these chambers. Spare your health, I bade him. Do let us turn back and forget the Amontillado. Coyly, I suggest that I petition Luchesi to sample the elixir and provide his expert opinion. No? Of course not. How well I know mine enemy.

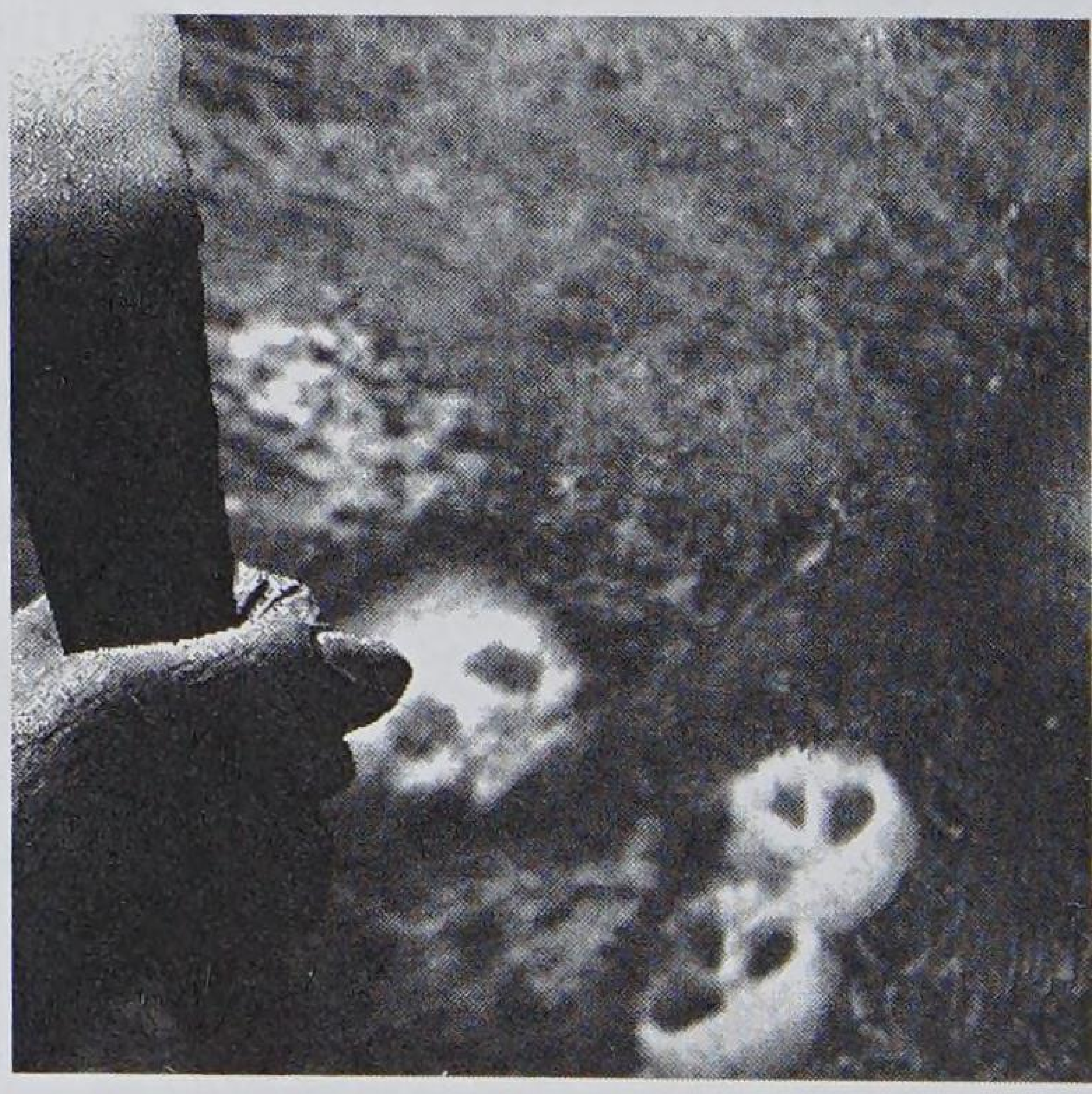
Then let us continue and turn right here. Just ahead, on the left, is lodged another wine rack. Perhaps another tonic might lubricate his irresolute hulk.

I approach the wine rack and turn to remove a fine cask of De Graves, striking it against the stone wall to open it. Again, I give the open bottle to Fortunato and watch in disgust as he pours the fermented beverage down his loathsome throat. I step closer to him, prepared to catch him should he stumble in his stupor. His brain must be fairly pickled by now. Ha! His destiny is clay within my merciless hands. I silently rejoice, stepping back from his lewd face.

Turning my back to the wine rack, I enter the passage before me. With the foul breath of my debased opponent creeping over my shoulder, I pass through the passage to my left.

I lead the drunken Fortunato past a crypt containing a single skeleton, then make an immediate and sharp left. My pulse quickens as we enter yet another passage, growing ever nearer our destination.

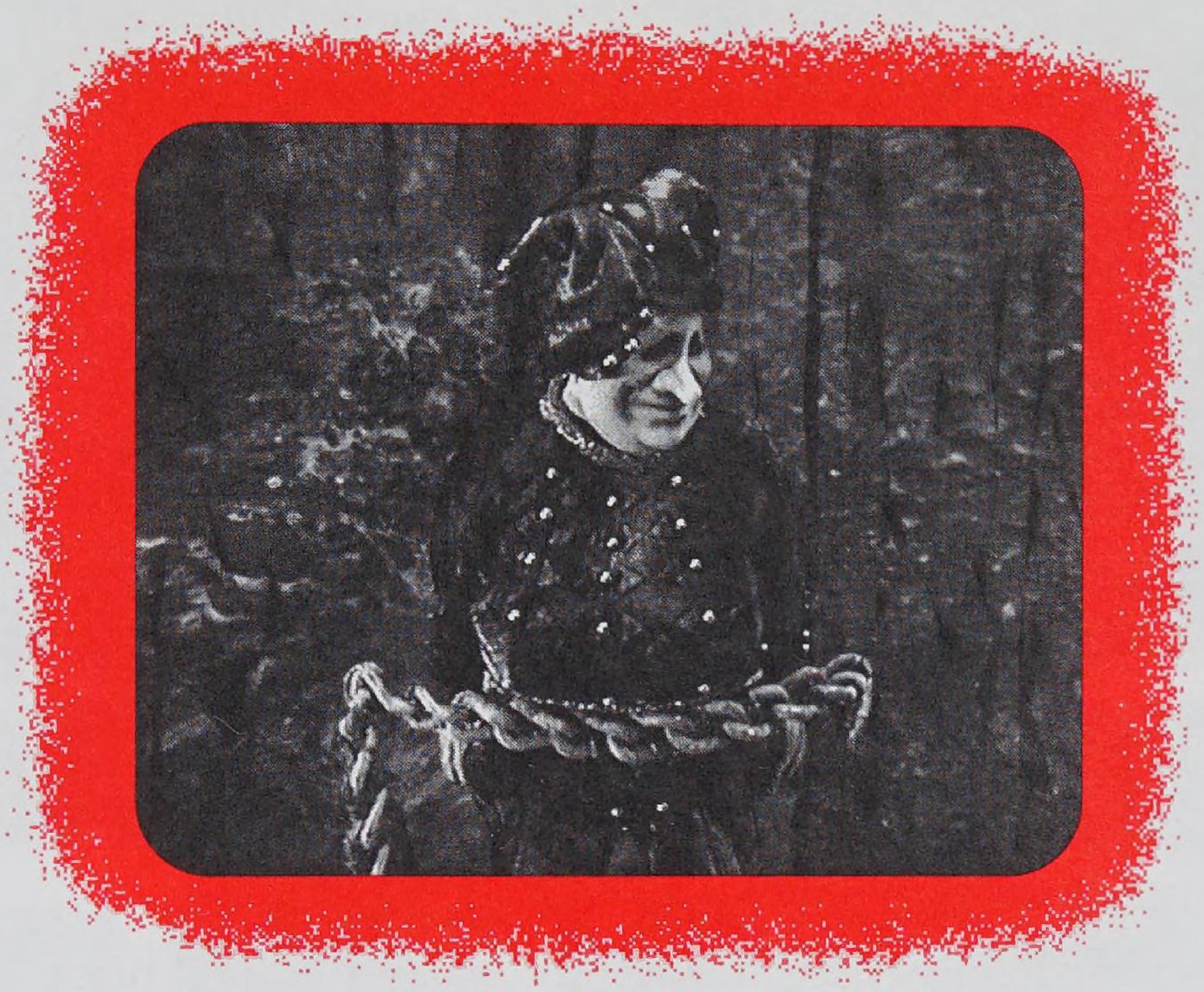
Winding our way through the catacombs, we turn right around a corner, then enter a narrow passage. A feeling of inner peace and joy–yes joy–fills me, as if entering a cathedral.



Not much longer now. Just ahead, three skulls cluster together in the wall. Here, I turn left and move forward into the open cavern before us. I place the torch in the sconce hanging from the wall.

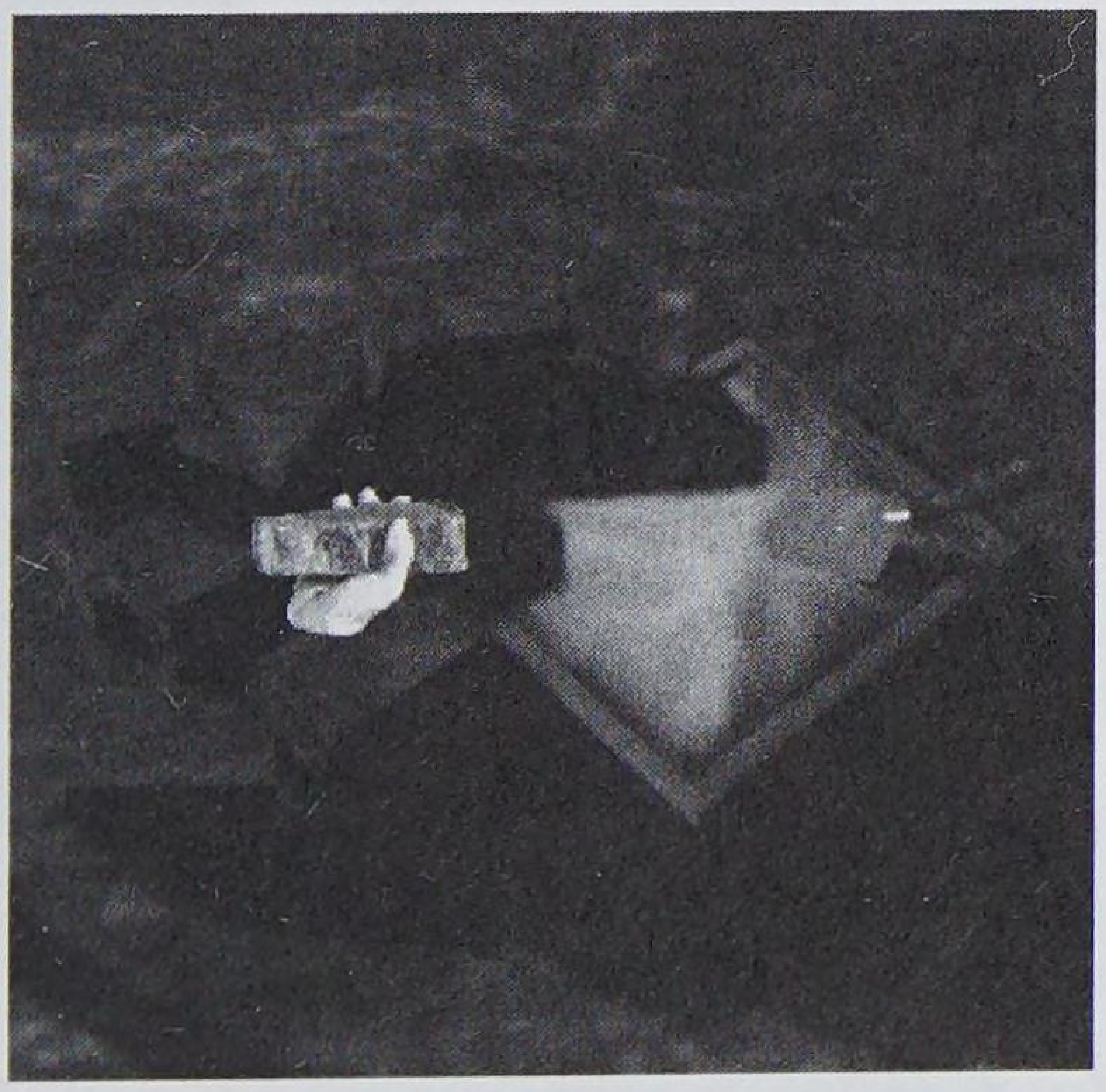
. . .

A delirious excitement wells within my breast. I stride into the dead-end room embedded in the far wall. In a most hospitable manner I invite my fervent visitor to enter the large crypt wherein the coveted Amontillado–and my just revenge–await him.

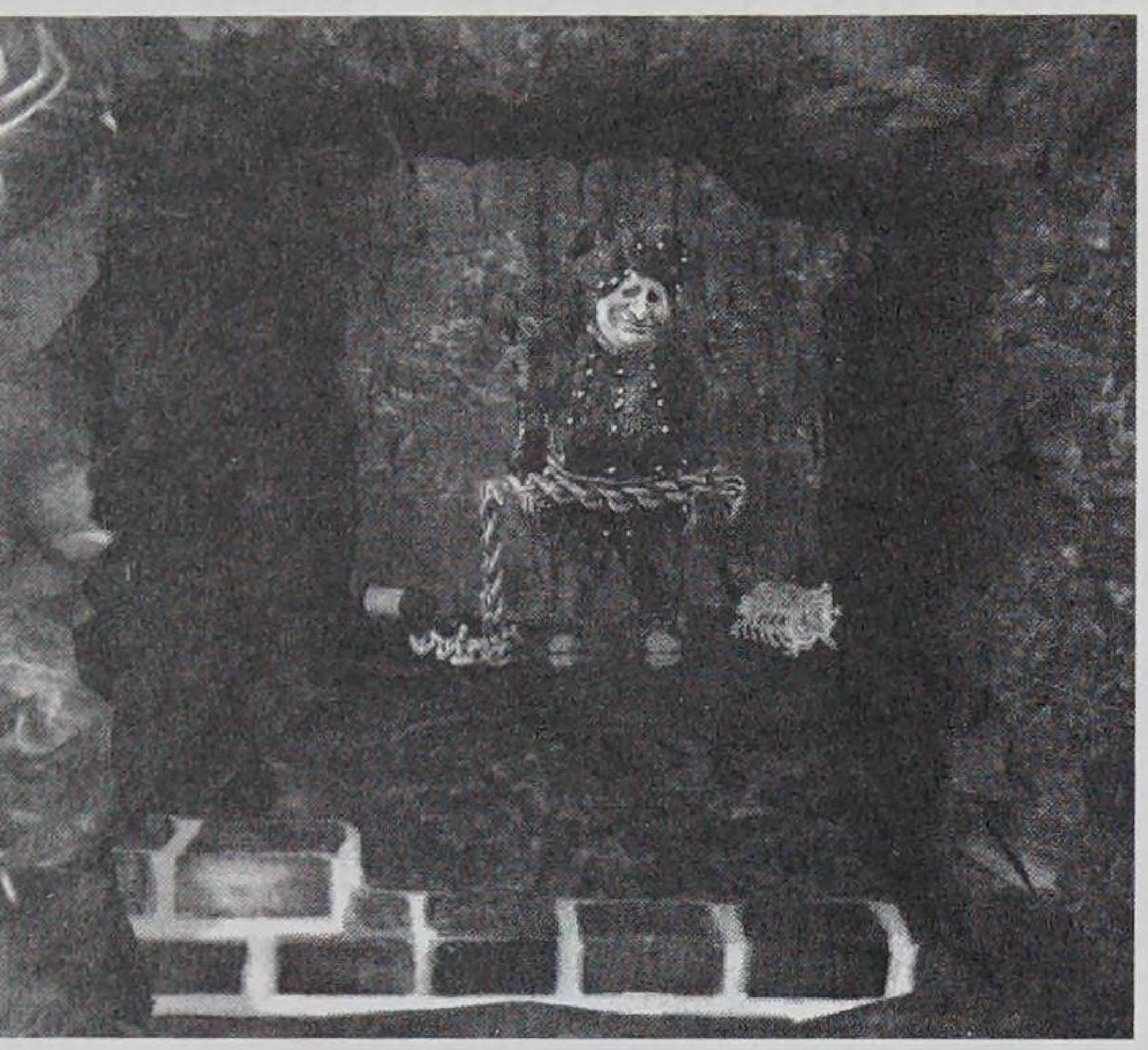


I watch expectantly as the rapacious old fool scuttles into the tomb with nary a moment's hesitation. Ever so mindfully, with great calm and precision, I follow him into the crypt. He stands with his back against the wall, his watery bloodshot eyes darting here and there in confusion. I quickly and deftly grasp the chain and pull it across his ample belly, fastening him soundly to the wall.

In fairness, I offer him one last chance of escape. That he is too inebriated to appropriately respond is of no consequence. Revenge is the only consequence of any consequence, is it not? I leave my stunned hostage in his comfy den and approach a pile of bones laying on the ground just outside his cell. I brush away the bones with my hand, and grab a brick.



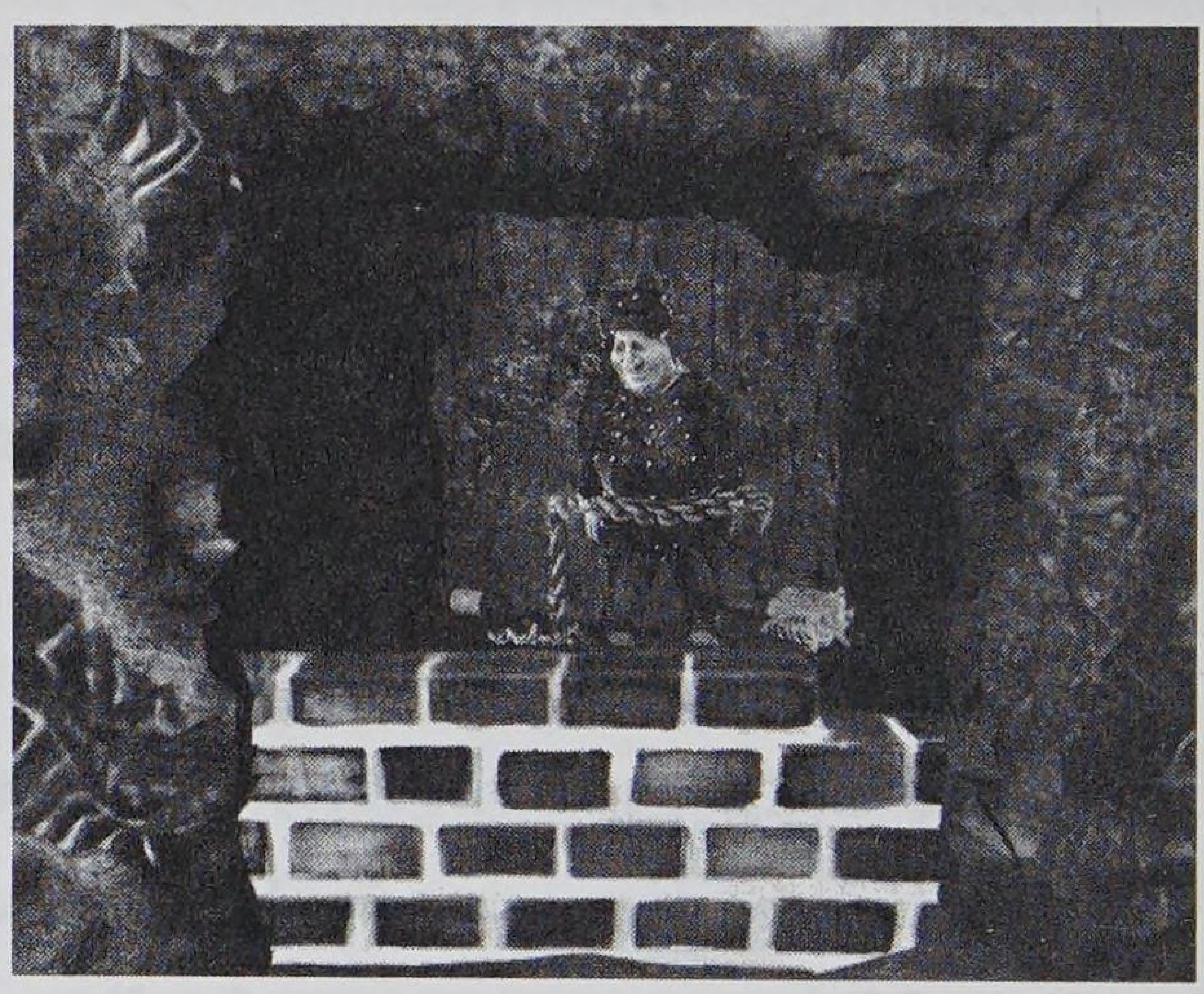
With the brick grasped firmly in my hand, I turn back to the opening of Fortunato's new quarters. I work quickly, setting the first brick on the bottom row of the opening–then a second brick. Suddenly, my guest surmises the sobriety of his predicament. His agonized screams serve only to increase the pleasure of his avenger–the cleverly vengeful Montresor.



I add a third brick, then enjoy a last chuckle with my newly complacent tormentor. Foolish, foolish man! Empowered with the intoxicating thrill of my sweet revenge, I quickly add course upon course of bricks with the seamless agility for which the Montresors are renowned.

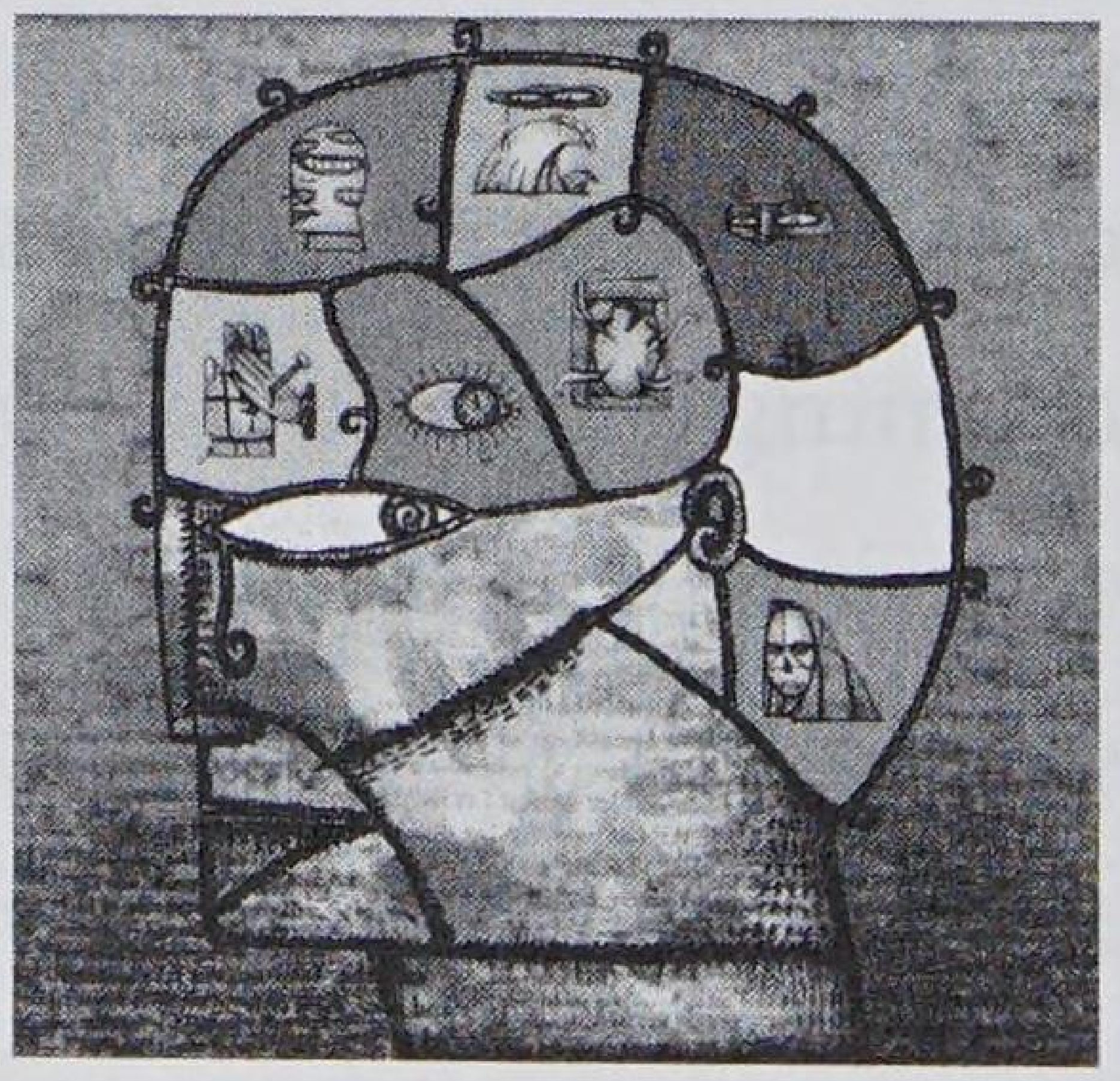
My revenge nearly complete, I place another brick near the top of the now tiny opening. Yes, indeed, for the love of God!

Before setting the final brick, I call out the name of my foolish foe: "Fortunato?" The disconsolate sounds of the bells jangling from his once-festive jester's cap reassures me of my righteous atonement. In his eternal damnation, the jester shall not soon forget the name or the purpose of his avenger. I *am* Montresor, and I do indeed punish with impunity!



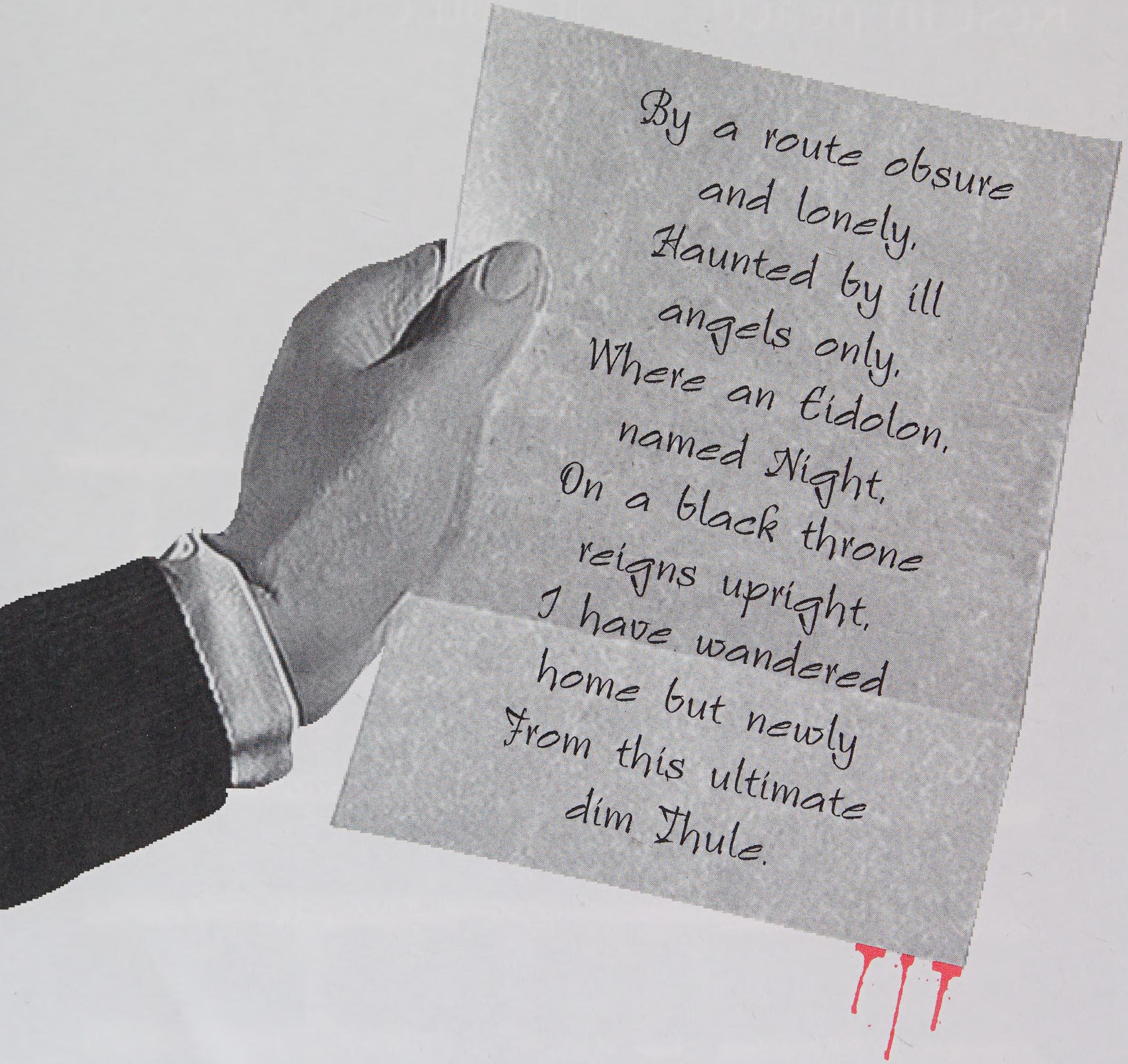
With immense satisfaction, I slide the final brick into position.

My body aching and my heart pounding from my ardent labor, I turn to leave this cold, damp vestibule. The velocity of my deed propels me through the catacombs, driving me to the comfort of my villa where I am certain to live out my days free of the pestilence that so long has plagued me. Hail the unfortunate demise of Fortunato.



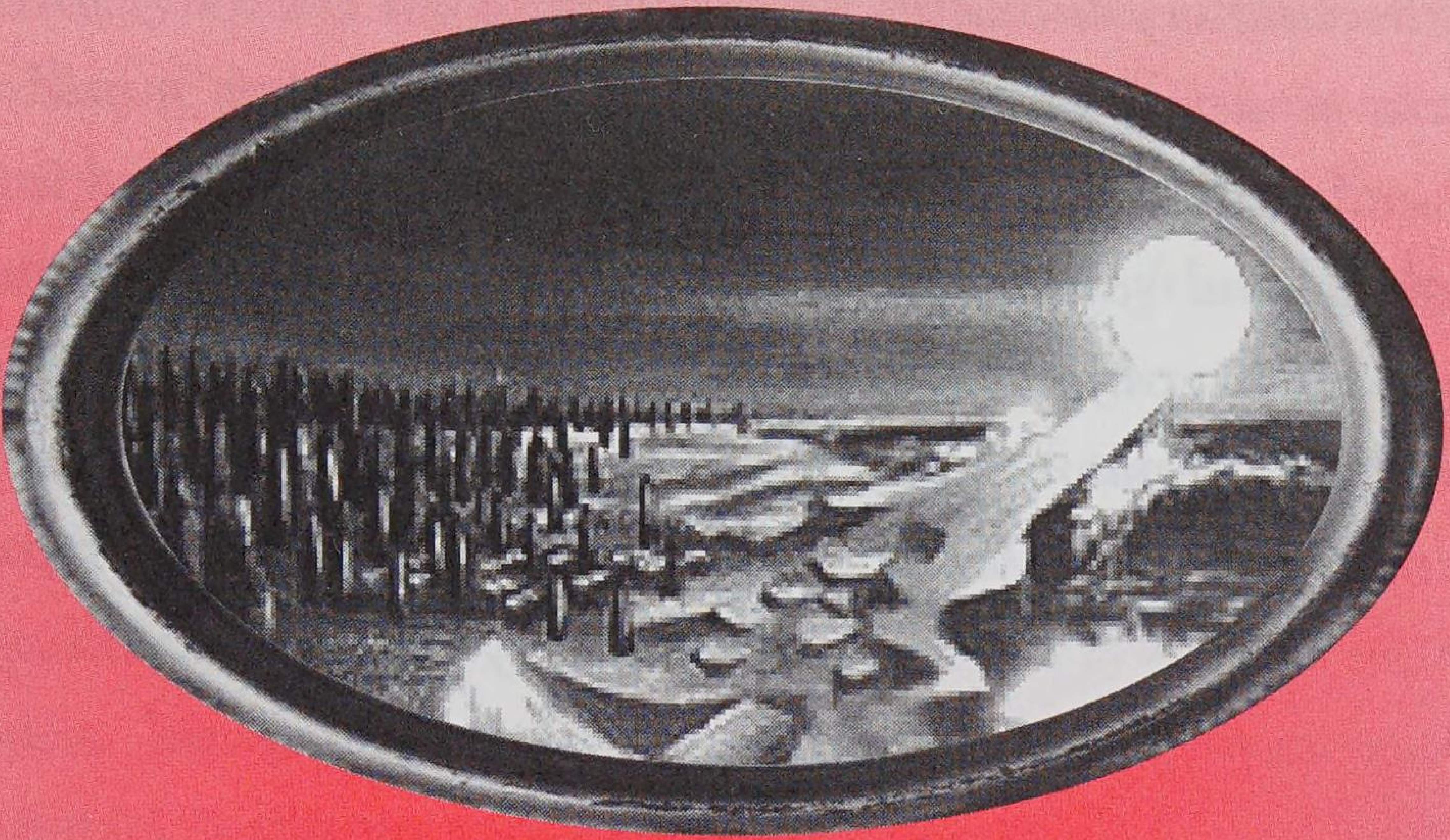
In pace requiescat!

Rest in peace . . . if you can, old fool.



By a route obsure
and lonely,
Haunted by ill
angels only,
Where an Eidolon,
named Night,
On a black throne
reigns upright,
I have wandered
home but newly
From this ultimate
dim Thule.

Chapter 11



Malevolence: Day Six

October 13, 1872

This house, this room . . . they are my punishment. My affliction is somehow related to this familial house of terror. Pain stabs at my head. So sharp is the blade that cuts through man's soul. The night terrors that afflict me are the cornerstone of my survival. I must keep my emotions and my thoughts intact.

How is it then, that I am so certain that revenge is best served cold . . . very cold? And could it be, that like my dear mad relatives, the vintage of years sours in an empty cask?

As I sit here collecting my thoughts and recording the events of this long and trying day, I struggle to understand the workings of the human mind. The boundaries between fantasy and reality, love and hate elude me. I had returned to this house of my youth to find solace and solidarity of spirit, to purge me of the inner demons and miseries that drove me to a life of isolation. I came expecting to find harmony within and without myself, and among my kin. Instead, I have found chaos and treachery, both in my waking and dream realms. The wretchedness that has befallen my relatives and my own person sickens my heart and twists my uncomprehending mind. What is it, exactly, that causes the psyche to fracture? What form of evil, or ignorance, or fear leads people to commit such heinous acts against one another? I know not.

A toxicity that maims the very souls of its inhabitants dwells here within the walls of uncle Edwin's mansion. I cannot ascertain the nature and form of this malevolence, and whether it exists elsewhere. Perhaps it lives only in the minds of those who succumb to it and those who emanate it from their being. But that it abides here in an undefined time and space—of this I am certain.

This lurking psychic poison became ever more apparent when I was abruptly roused from last night's mystic abstraction. Once again, I found myself standing alone in a room of the mansion—this time, the conservatory—with no recollection of how or why I had gotten there. I felt dazed and disturbed, as if I had just experienced a traumatic experience, having never slept at all. The sight of the wine on the table repulsed me, and I fought hard against the urge to hurl the bottle through the windows of the conservatory.

Instead, I gathered myself together as best I could and determined to restore some semblance of civility, if not order, to this household. An edgy uneasiness settled over me as I made my way downstairs to the gallery. There, on the walls, Edwin had hung another insidious painting that, by God, had come directly from my own nightmares—or night stalkings, whichever they prove to be. I hurried to the studio and approached the paintings leaning against the wall, then to the front of the easel to the freshly painted depiction of horror resting there. Whatever it is that consumes me has clearly also penetrated Edwin's psyche. Or is it that he has gone mad and somehow projects his deranged thoughts into my mind. Either possibility terrifies me.

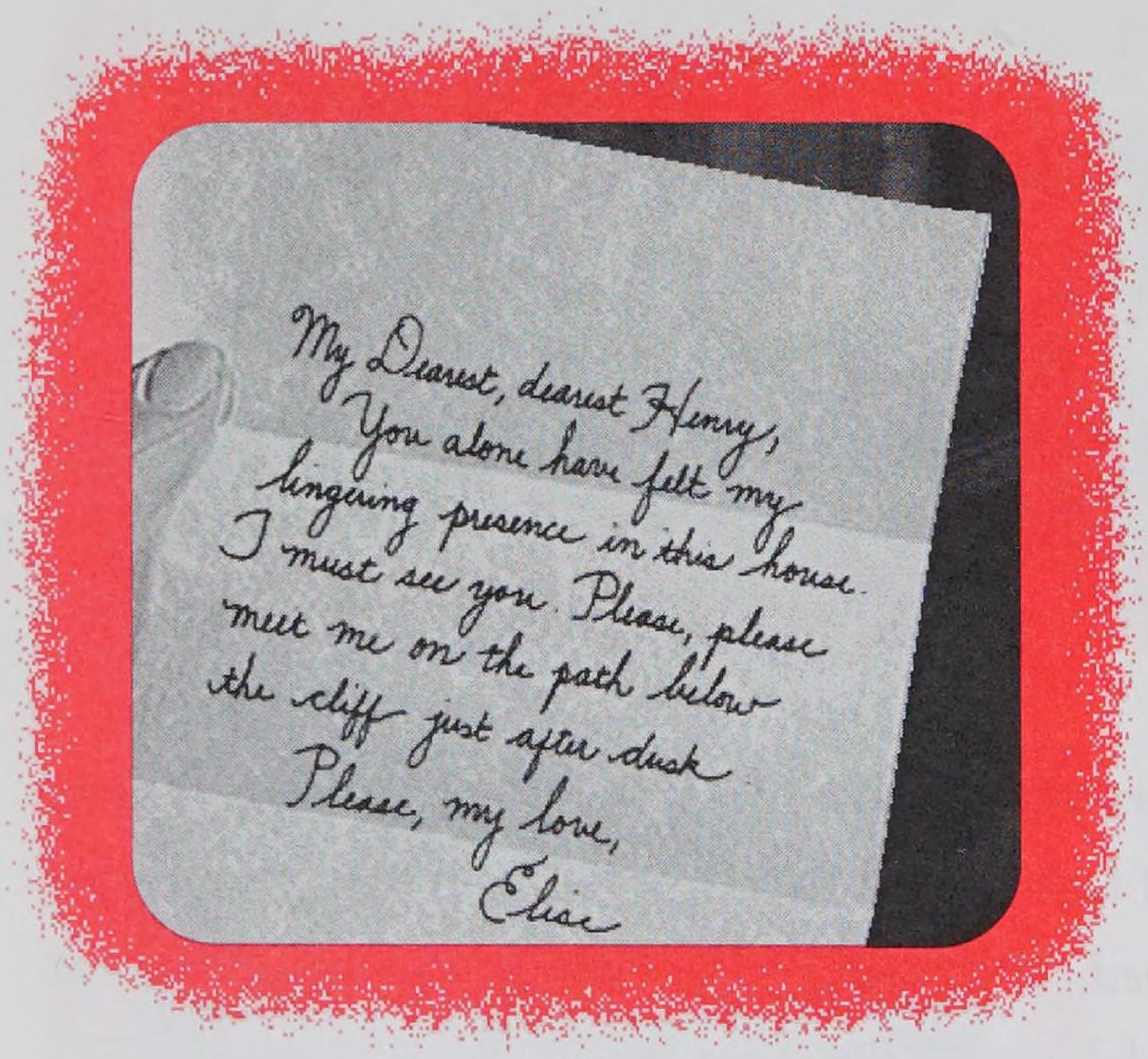
I went in search of Henry, and on a hunch, found him in the half room, despondent and sitting too near the edge for my comfort. He did not acknowledge me when first I opened the door and entered the room. Carefully, so as not to startle him, I approached him, appalled at the hollow of his eyes when he at last gazed up at me. More appalling still were his delusional ramblings that Elise lived, that he had, in fact, heard her sweet voice, felt her caress, witnessed the beating of her stilled heart.

In pity and fondness, I brushed my brother's disheveled hair from his forehead. I was then further alarmed to learn that he had disclosed his demented beliefs to Edwin. This blasphemous nonsense had, no doubt, worked Edwin into quite a lather. Before I could reason with Henry, he leapt to his feet and scurried out of the room. Of course, I tried *to follow him out of the room and down the stairwell, however, his movements were quick and erratic, and I lost sight of him.*

. . .

Edwin met me at the bottom of the stairs. His icy demeanor took on a sinister tone as he menacingly cast accusations at me. I must say that, given his abstruse conduct and bizarre paintings, I returned his stare with equal disdain and distrust. And I could not help but raise an eyebrow when he declared Henry mad. What of you, dear cousin, what of you? This was not the Edwin I had known and loved. Not at all the charitable fellow of my youth.

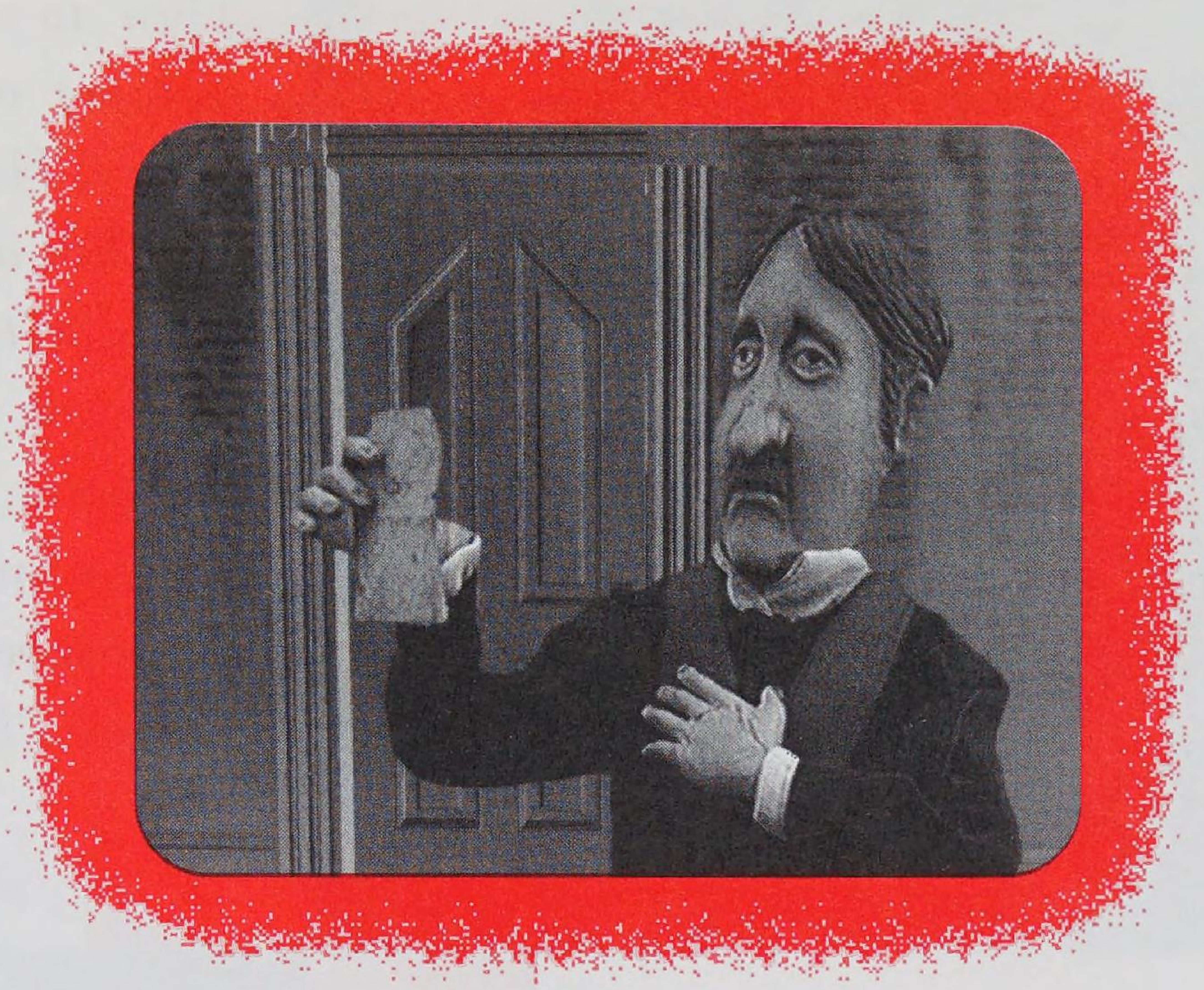
Insisting that I once more play the role of love's messenger, he bade me to follow him to the Library. I humored him, and waited patiently by the desk as he wrote a message, ostensibly from Elise to Henry. Of course, I questioned the wisdom of feeding into the delusions of a deeply disturbed and wounded man such as Henry. Of course, I did! How could I not? Still, though filled with anxiety over the flaws in Edwin's logic and the potential harm I felt it might do, I allowed myself to partake in the deceitful stratagem.



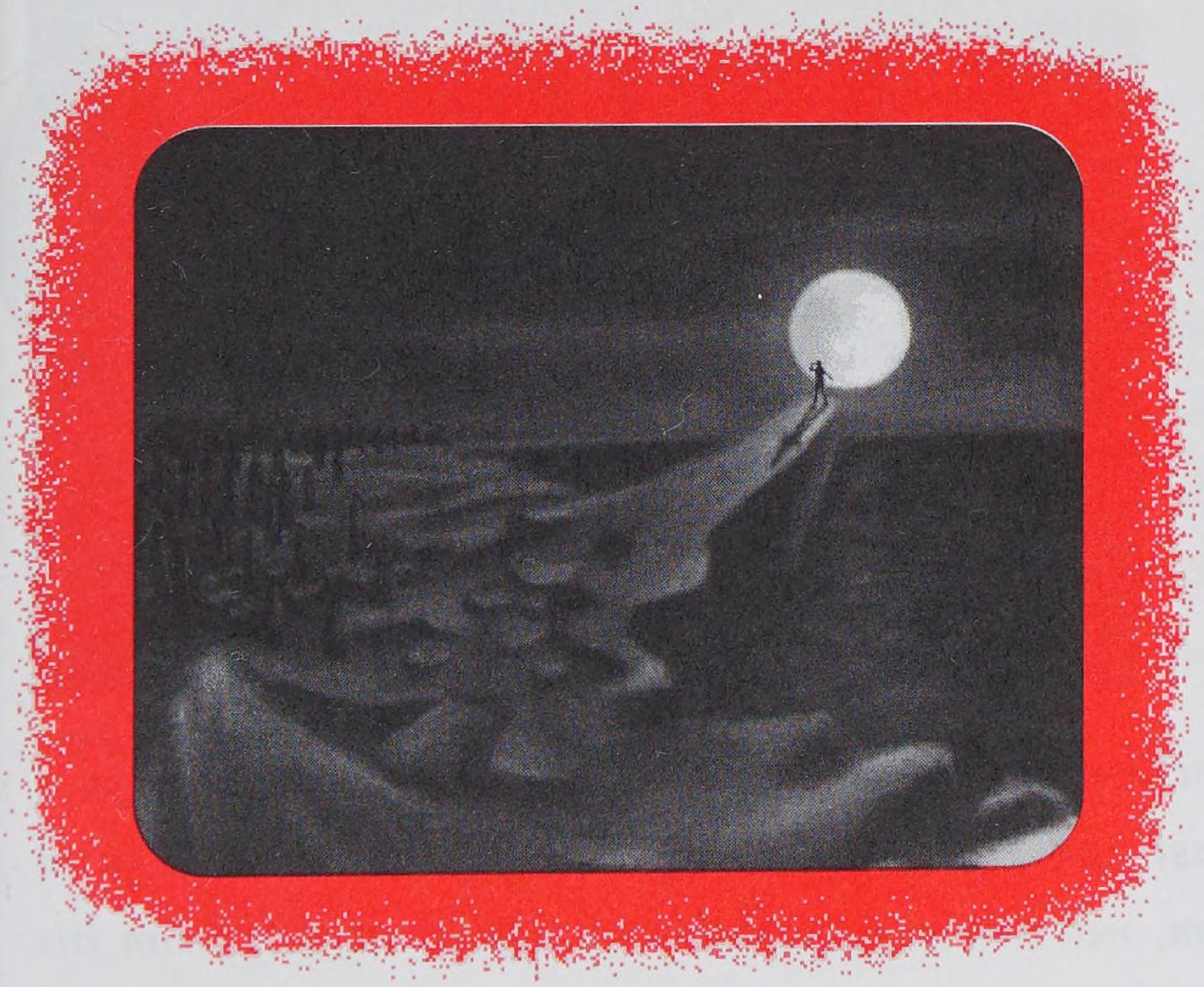
My Dearest, dearest Henry,
You alone have felt my
lingering presence in this house.
I must see you. Please, please
meet me on the path below
the cliff just after dusk
Please, my love,
Elise

Edwin gave me the letter, which I took with quaking hands. As I turned my back to him, he stole out of the room. I opened the letter and read it. Then I refolded it and left the Library, unsure of what to do next. Would the letter shake Henry from his delusions? Or plummet him completely into madness? The ruse greatly troubled me. I felt as though there was a crucial piece of information that had somehow escaped me.

It was in this perplexed state that I next made my way upstairs, where I encountered Henry. He was extremely distressed—fully out of his mind with anxiety. In his heightened state of agitation, he immediately intuited my own apprehension. Spotting the letter, he snatched it from my hand and read it before I could even object.

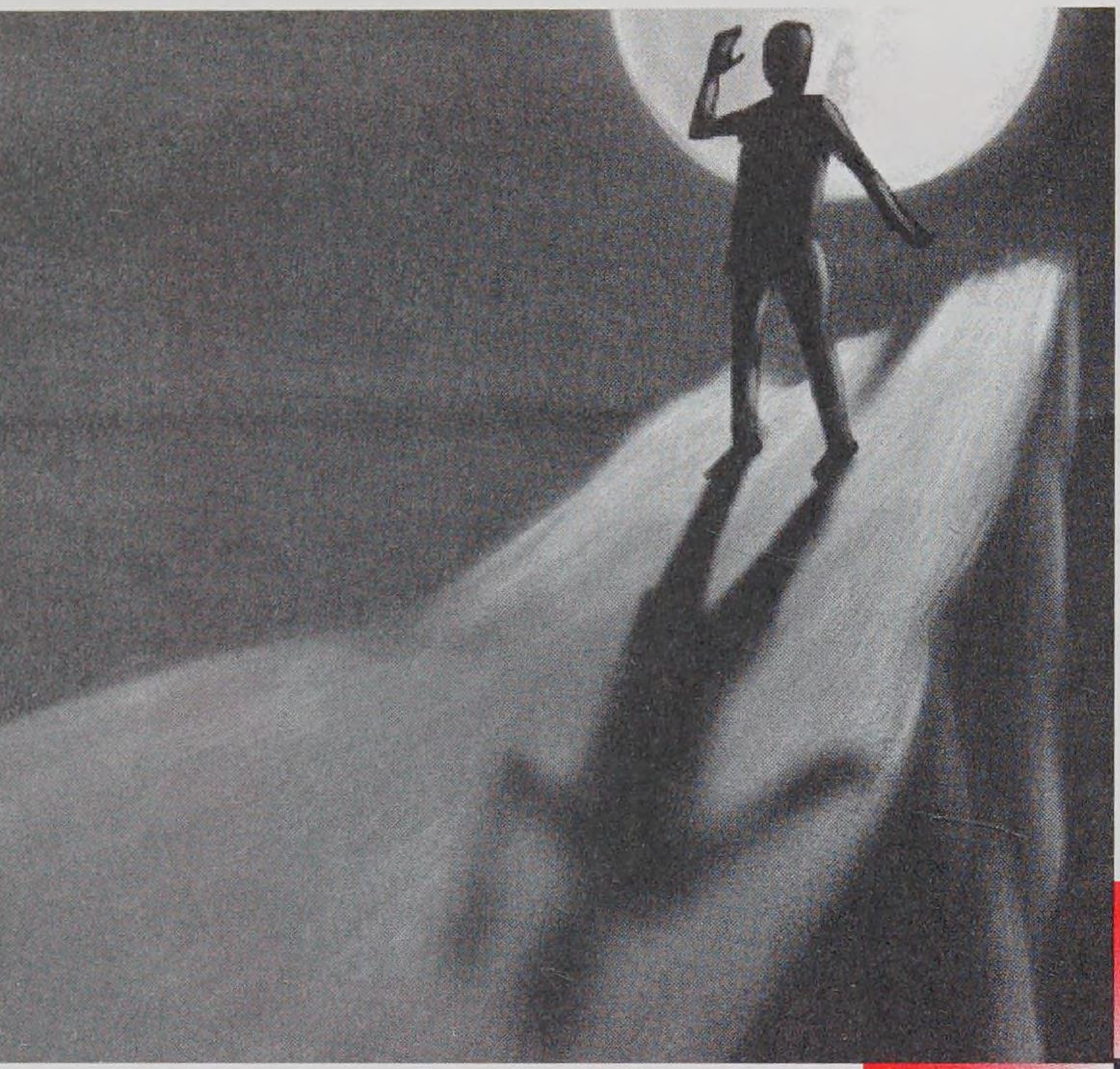


He bolted down the stairs in a panic with me close at his heels. He ran out the front door of the mansion and into the brisk night air. I followed as quickly as I could, but could not move fast enough to intercept him. From the manicured lawn of Edwin's estate, I watched helplessly as my younger brother raced out to the bluff overlooking the sea. The raging surf lashed at him again and again, and then, to my horror, claimed him, my only brother.



My heart sank and the strength drained from my body as a silent scream exploded from my lungs,

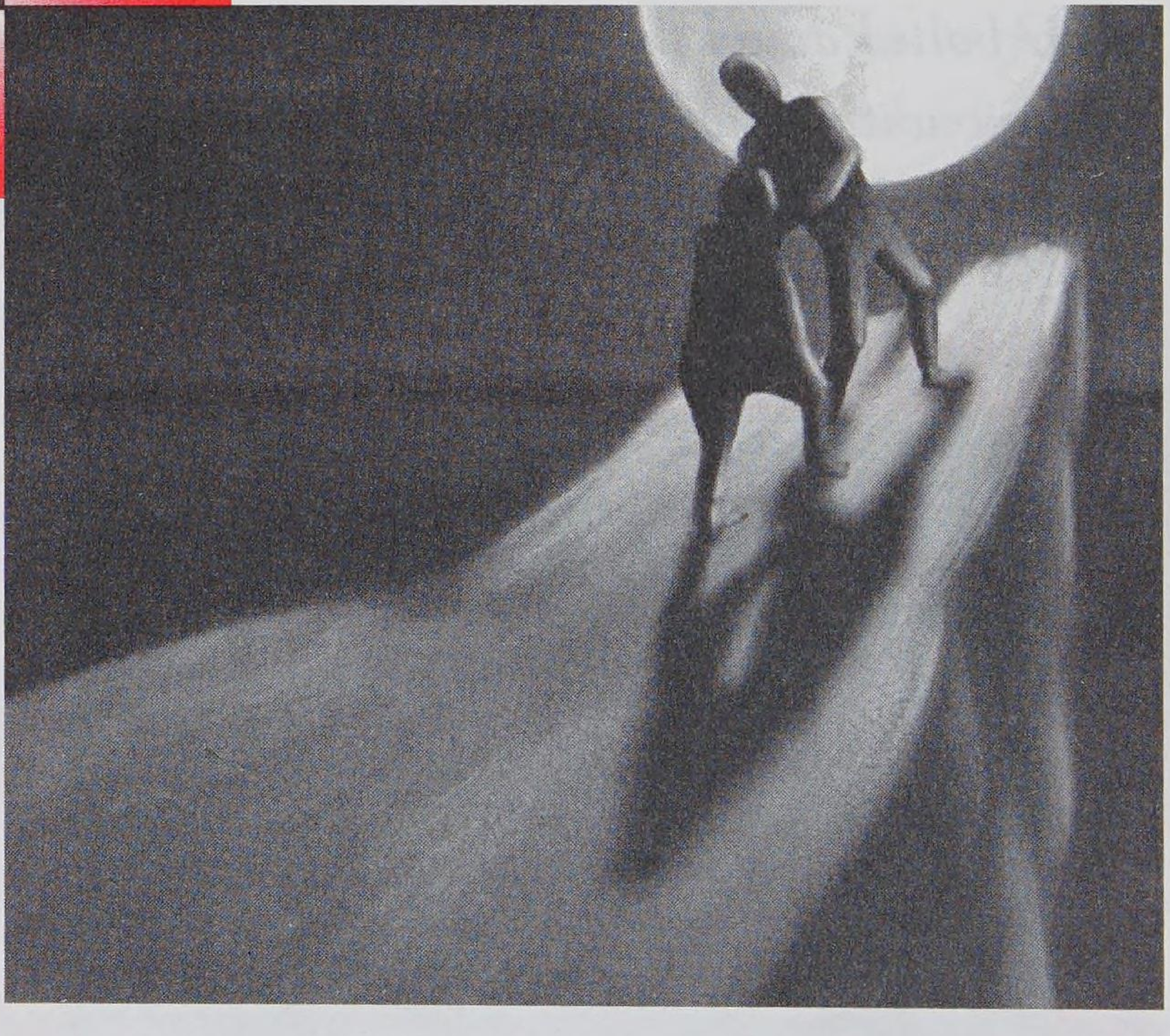
"Noooo!"



Then to my amazement, I saw a figure clinging valiantly to the edge of the cliff. Henry! He struggled to the top of the cliff.

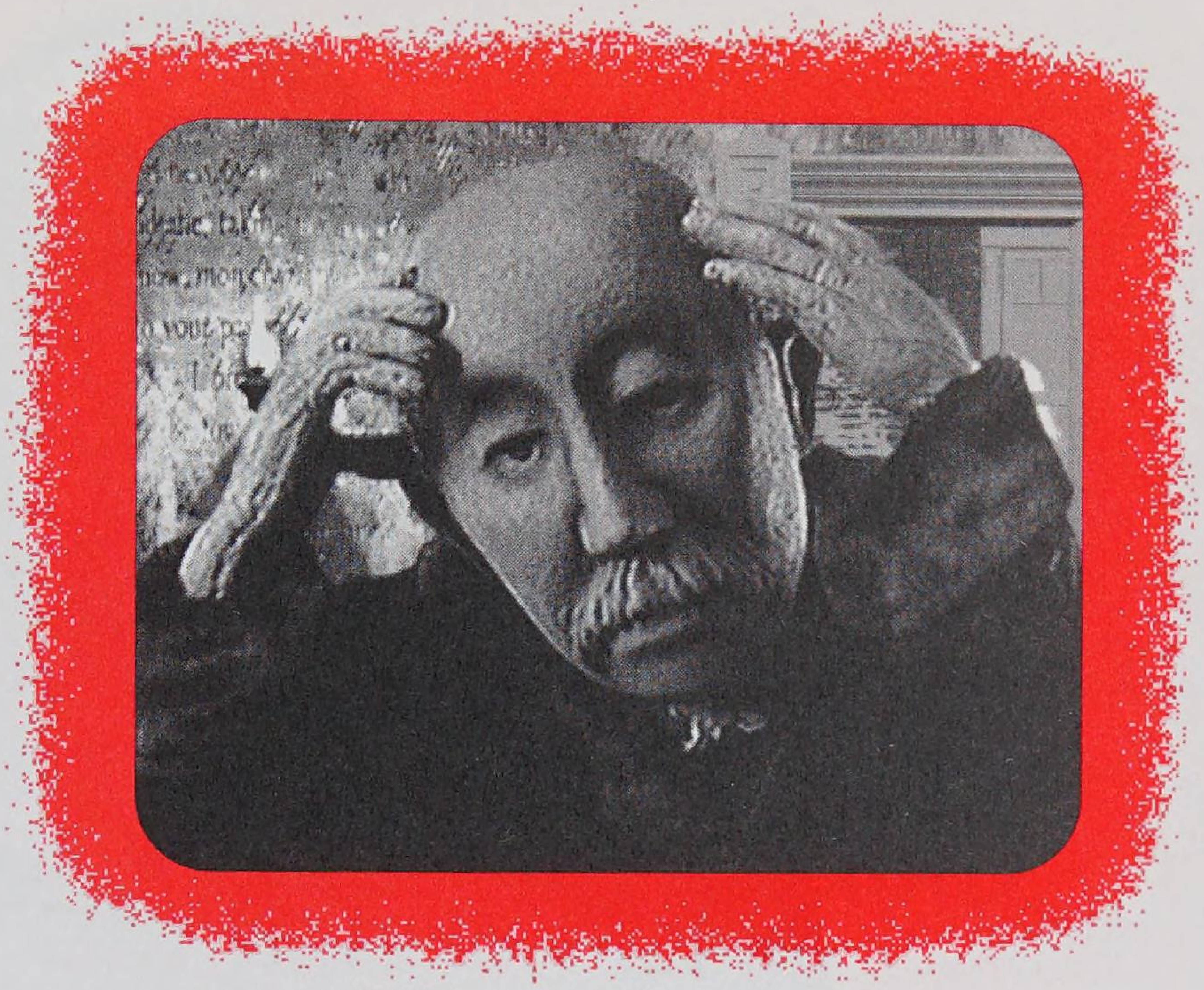
Then another figure emerged, rising as if from the turbulent water itself, climbing up the bank toward Henry. From my distant viewpoint, I could not tell who it was. My brother ran to greet the ascending figure with outstretched arms, calling out the name of his beloved, "Elise! Elise!"

But it was not Elise. It was an entrapment. For what seemed like an eternity, I observed, frozen with fear, as my brother fought for his life with the mysterious intruder sent to do him harm. As they plunged, arms locked in battle, into the sea, I recognized Henry's opponent as Ambers. And in that instant, I realized with rage and sorrow the identity of the true murderer—the lunatic who had orchestrated my brother's death.

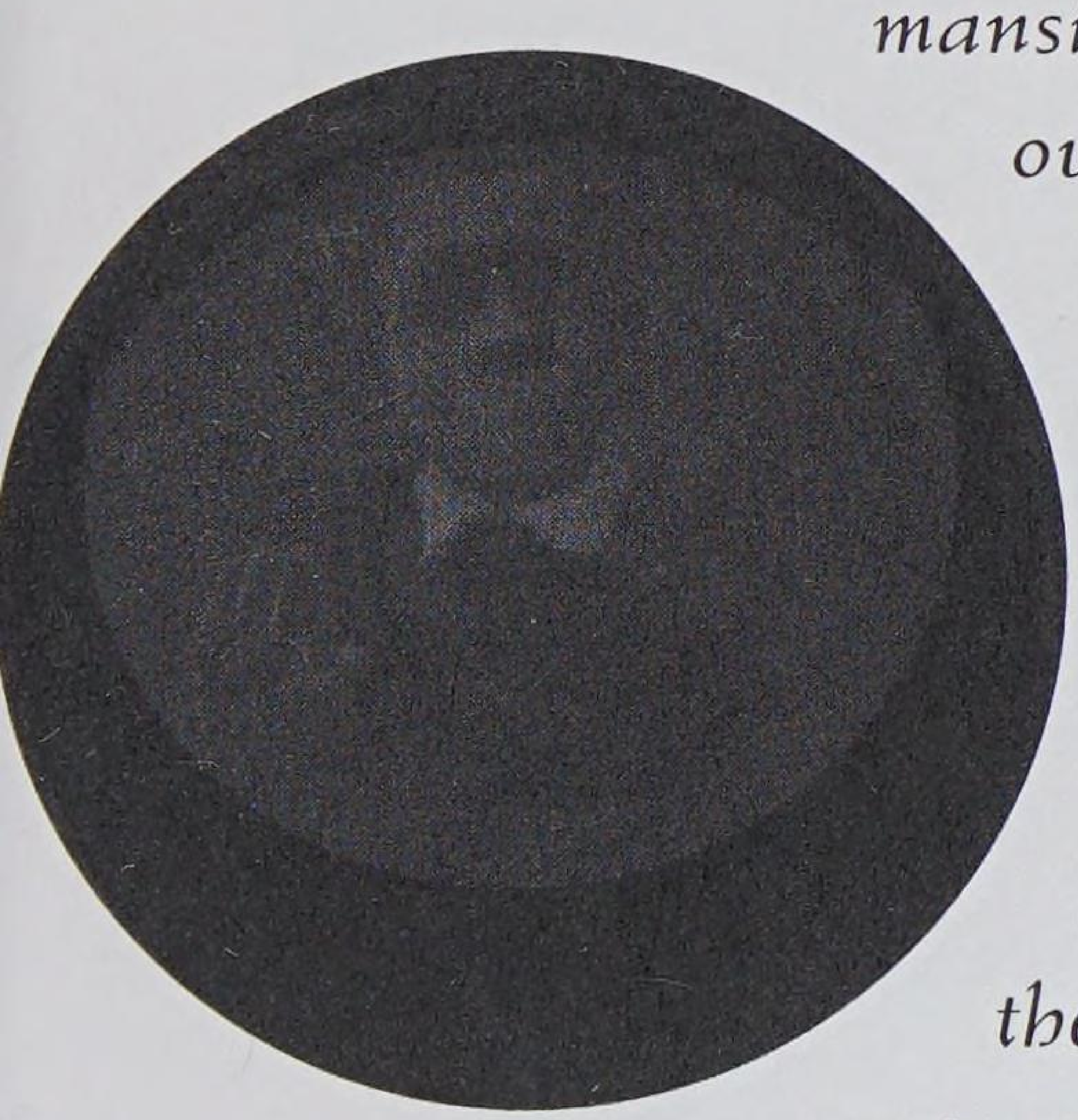


I turned back toward the house and came face-to-face with the repellent assassin—my own Uncle Edwin. His face filled with wrath, he railed against those who had opposed him with cold and indignant fury. I stepped toward him, not knowing whether to defend myself from his destruction or to control myself from destroying him.

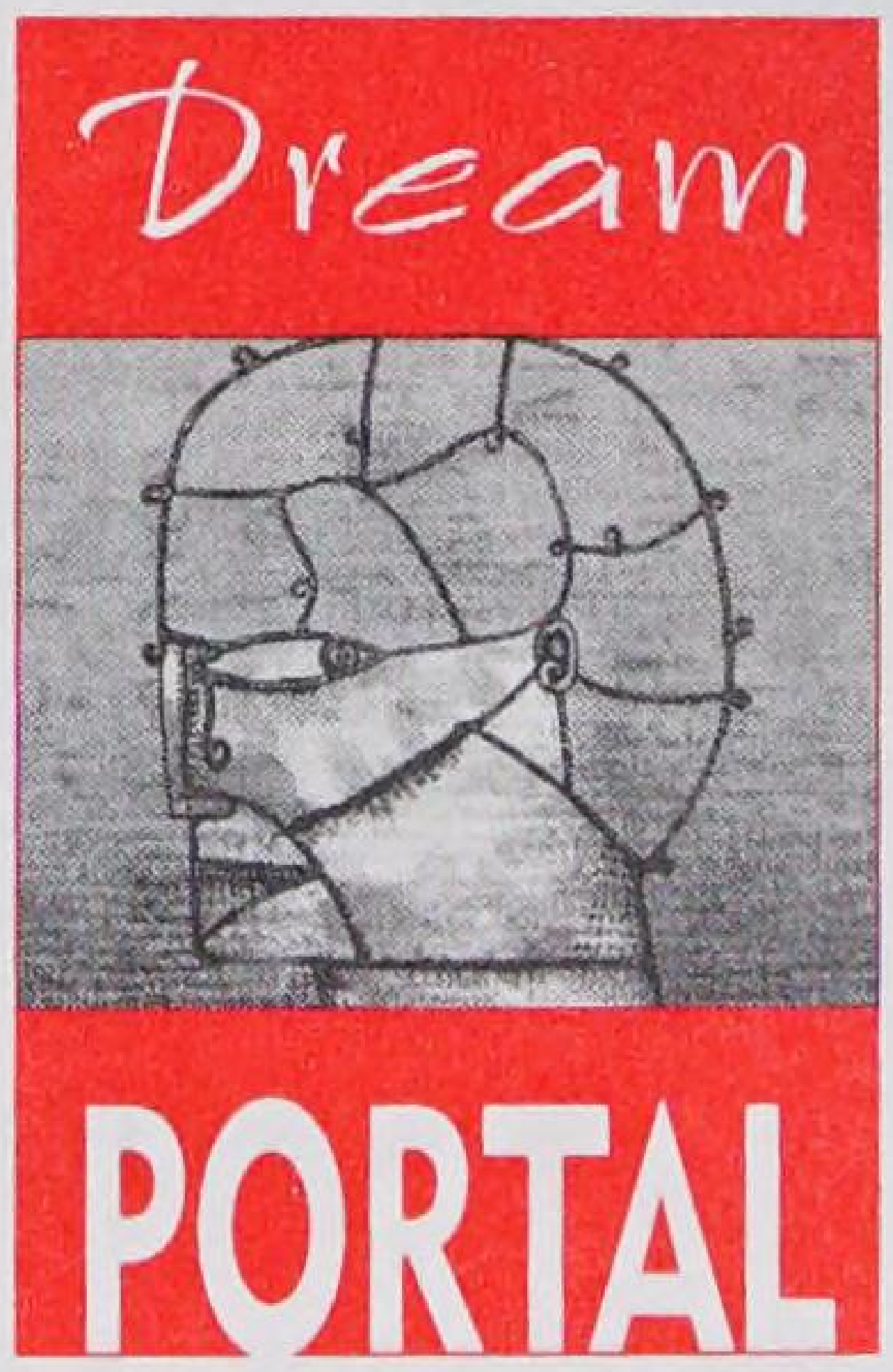
. . .

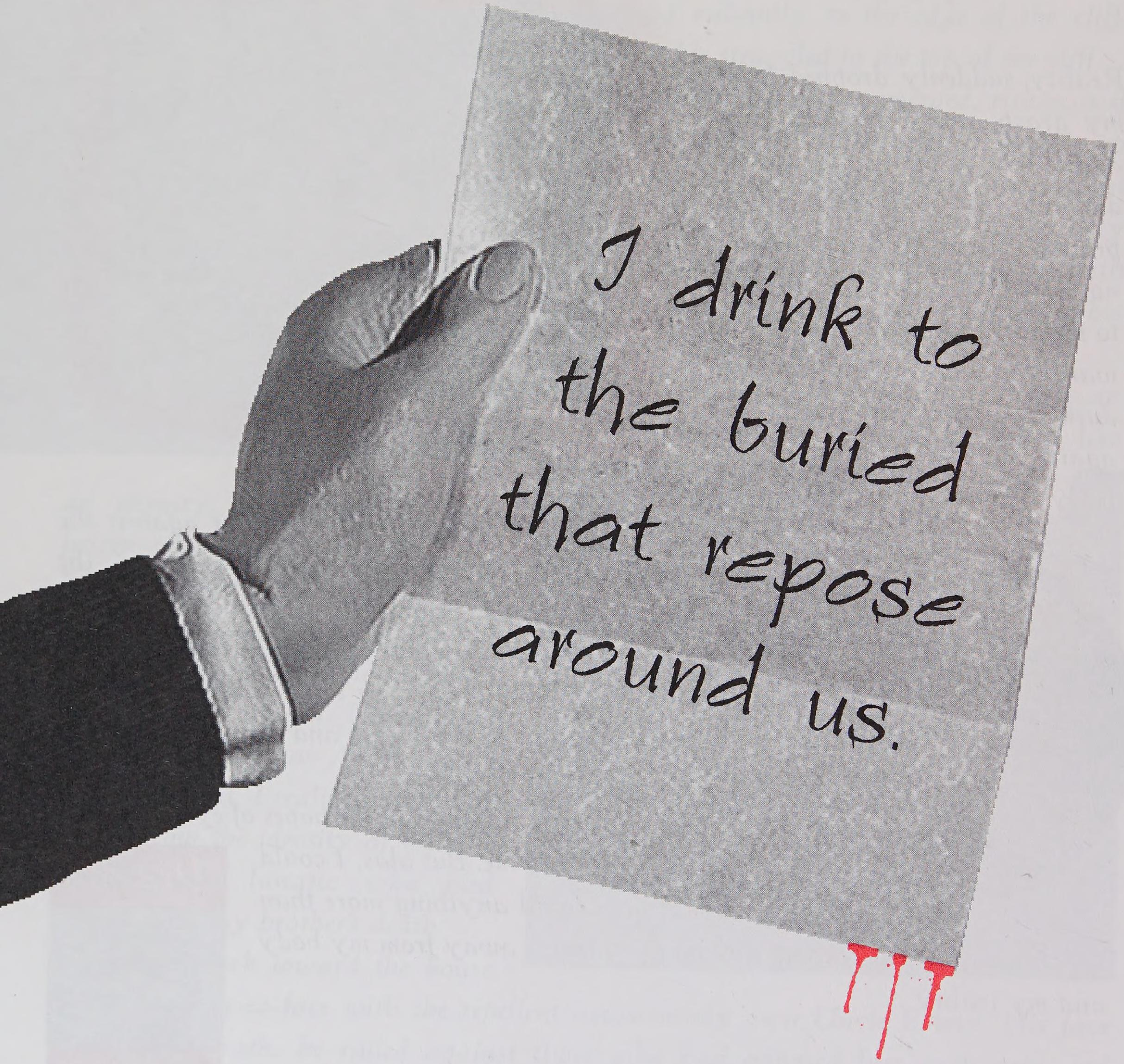


Reality suddenly dropped from my grasp, and I plunged once again into a pit of surrealistic despair. My soul cried out in protest, "Dear God in Heaven, no more! Why does this happen to me over and again?" I did not want to venture into another dark and terrifying realm yet again, but against my will, my body moved through Edwin's mansion. With everything in my being, I fought against the overpowering force that carried me upstairs to the conservatory. I stood before the table, shaking and nauseous, drawn to my image floating in the wine glass resting there. Involuntarily, my hand reached out, as if no longer attached to my body, and skimmed the blood red wine that filled the glass.



I tried to retain consciousness in the hopes of eye-witness to the force that captured me. But alas, I could not, nor do not now recall anything more than the sensation of floating up and away–far, far away from my body and my reality . . .





I drink to the buried that repose around us.

Chapter 12

The Cask of Amontillado

Fortunato

Florence, Italy, 1803

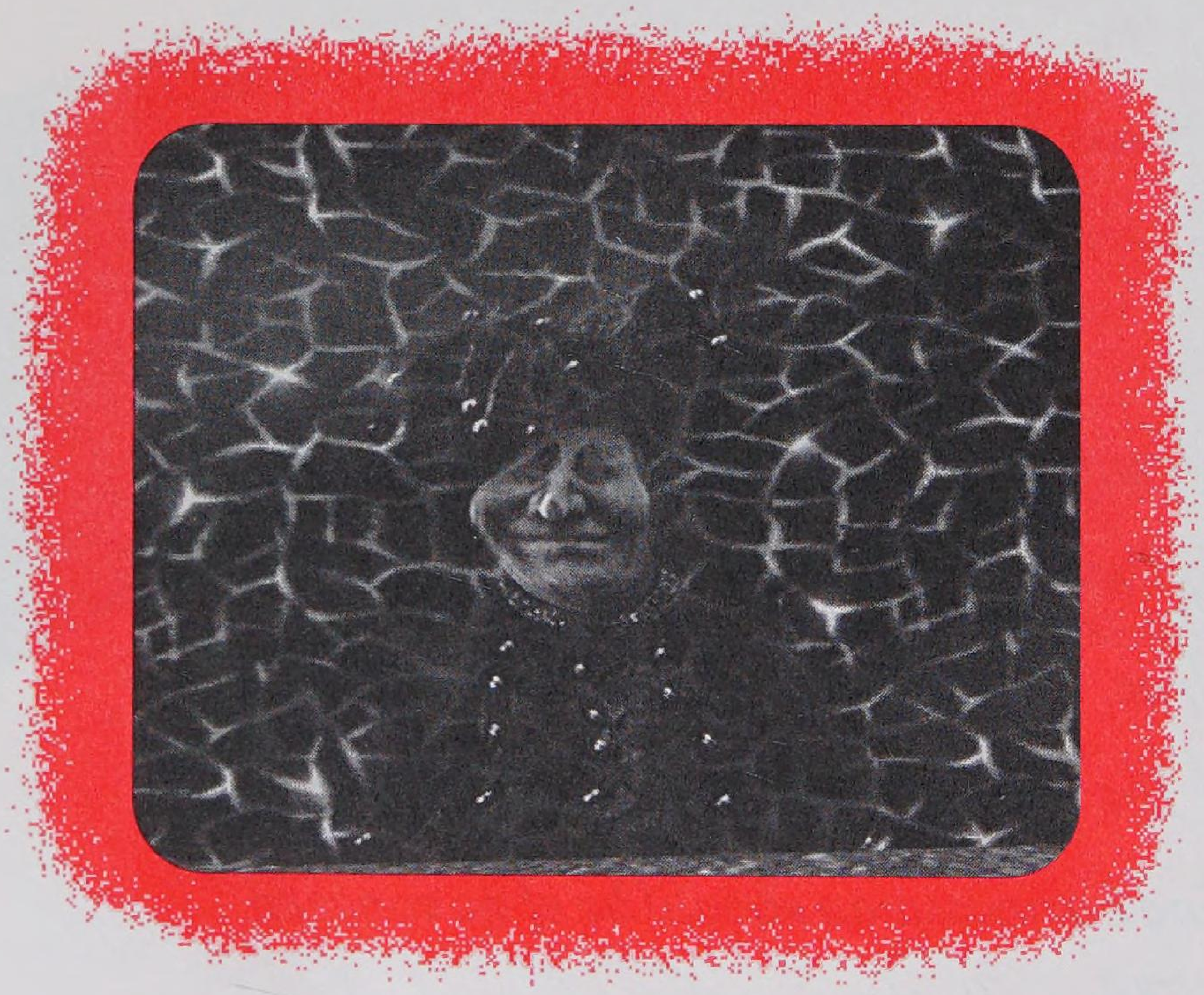
Wine, women and song—what else is there in life, I ask you? There is such freedom in power, in social stature, in ones devouring greed. They say I am a tyrant, but pray tell, would a tyrant such as I walk so freely among the general dregs of society with chin held high? I think not. True, I am the most knowledgeable man I know where matters of the grape are concerned, and that I happen to be a most cunning businessman should be of no concern to those of disadvantage. After all, they need not have dealings with so respectable a man as I. My flamboyant brilliance stuns even me.

Of course on occasion, certain individuals come to feel I have perhaps treated them unfairly. These unfortunate souls, such as the Montresor himself, are quite undeserving of my counsel or financial venture. I suppose I merely withstand their unsavory presence so as to oversee their decision-making abilities and–for familial purposes–to keep peace in their wretched home lives by taking liberty with their wives. All in all, it is a fair business deal–lock, stock and barrel, would you not say?

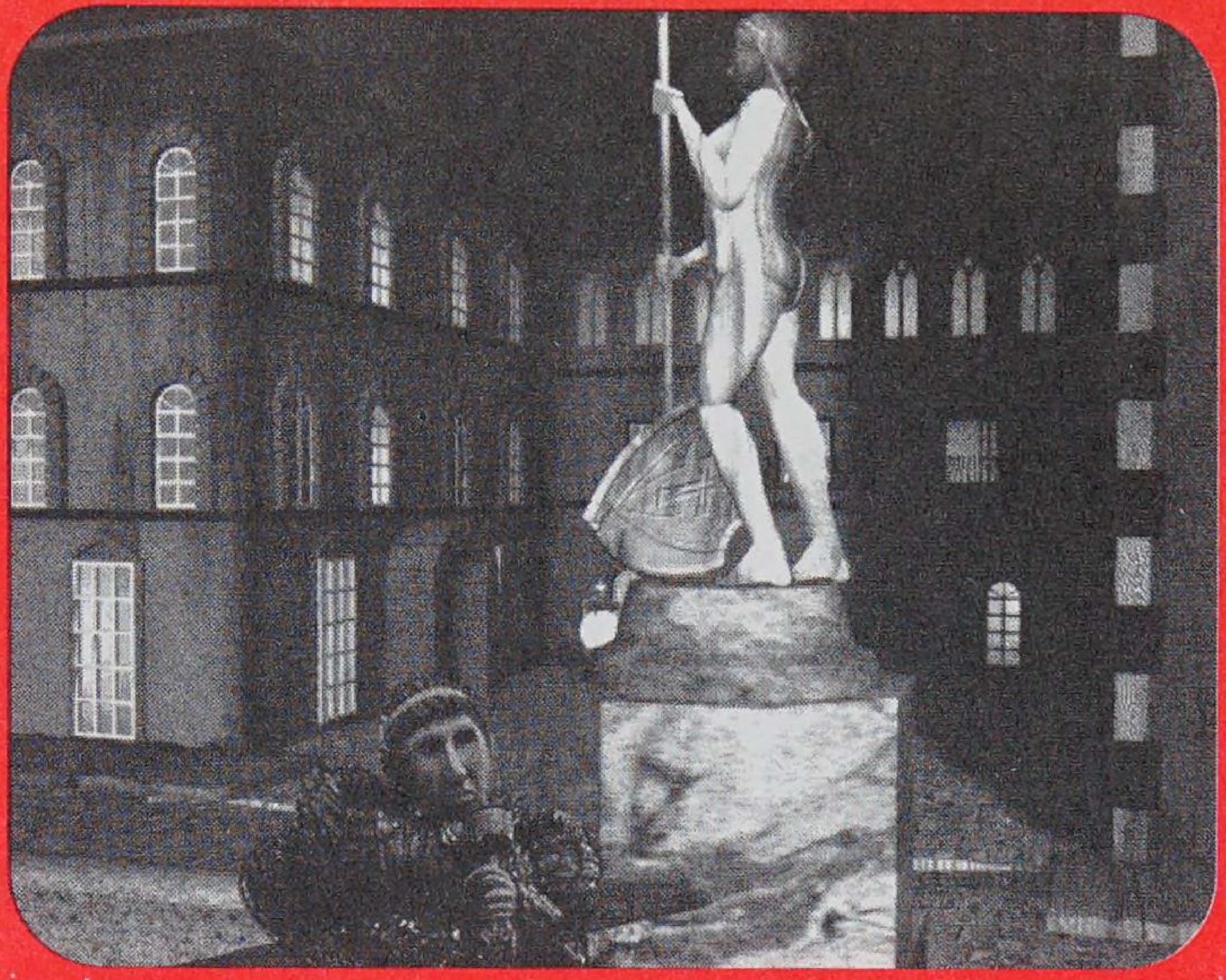
Ah, the Carnival. The populace of our fair city all decked out in extravagant costume, chirping about in such flights of fancy! I do so love a party, especially when I am the center of it. That gorgeous reflection–what a handsome gent I am. But wait . . . who is that masked man across the way? How dare he stare so boldly in my direction. Perhaps I should wave to him. Then again, he's probably jealous; I am, after all, a gentleman of whom many *are* envious.

Silly me, I waste precious drinking time with imbeciles when there are ladies to be had. Ah, Desdemona! Indeed, she *is* worth waiting for . . . especially when her husband departs on business. Those round breasts . . . enough to make a man's eyes bleed. In my mind's eye, I caress her ample bosom.

I turn and engage in conversation with my sometime business partner, Luchesi. Yes, yes. Our business is nearly complete. Wine, you say? Far be it for me to

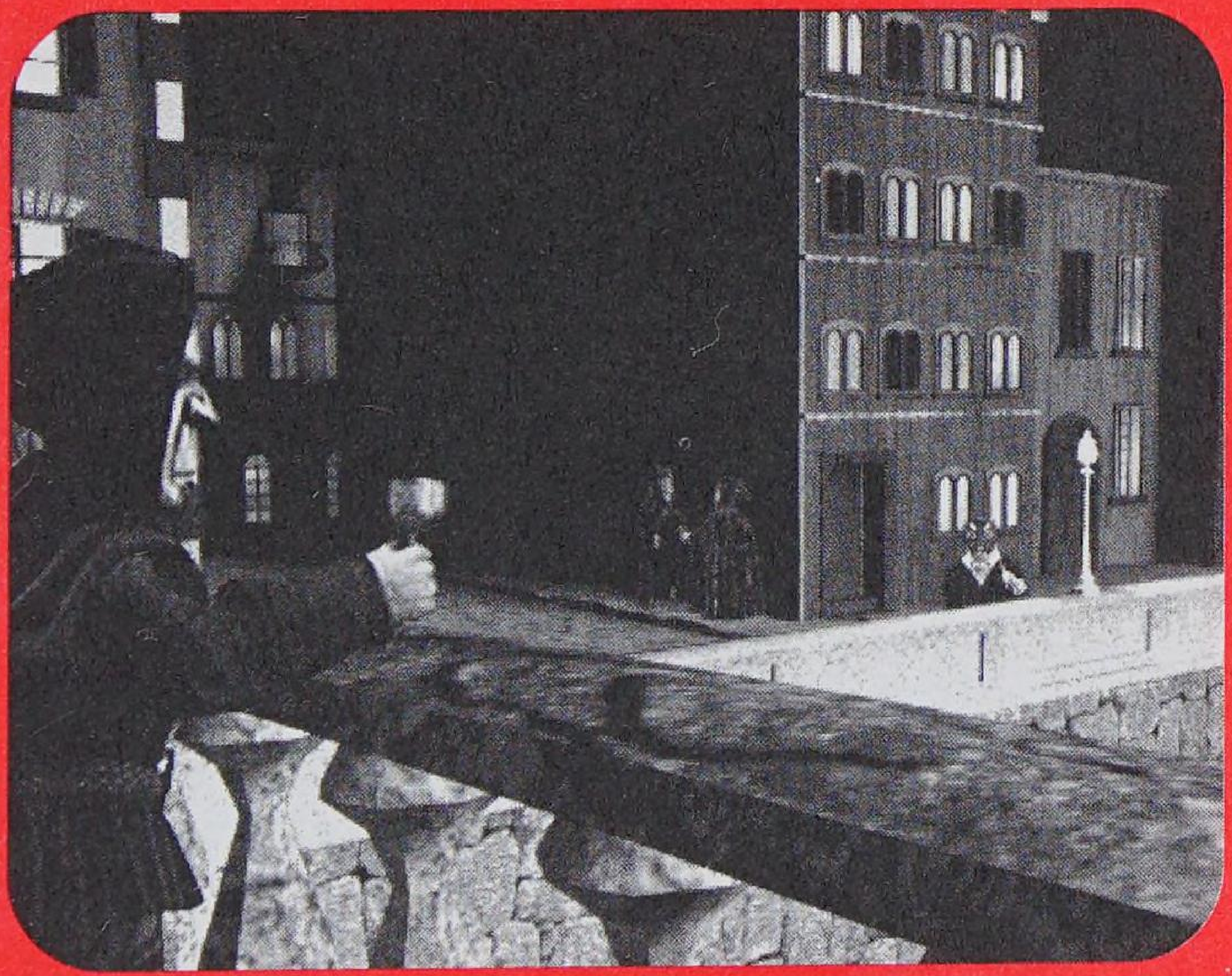


refuse the nectar of the gods. Quite brave of him to offer, seeing as how I am the greatest wine connoisseur of the land.



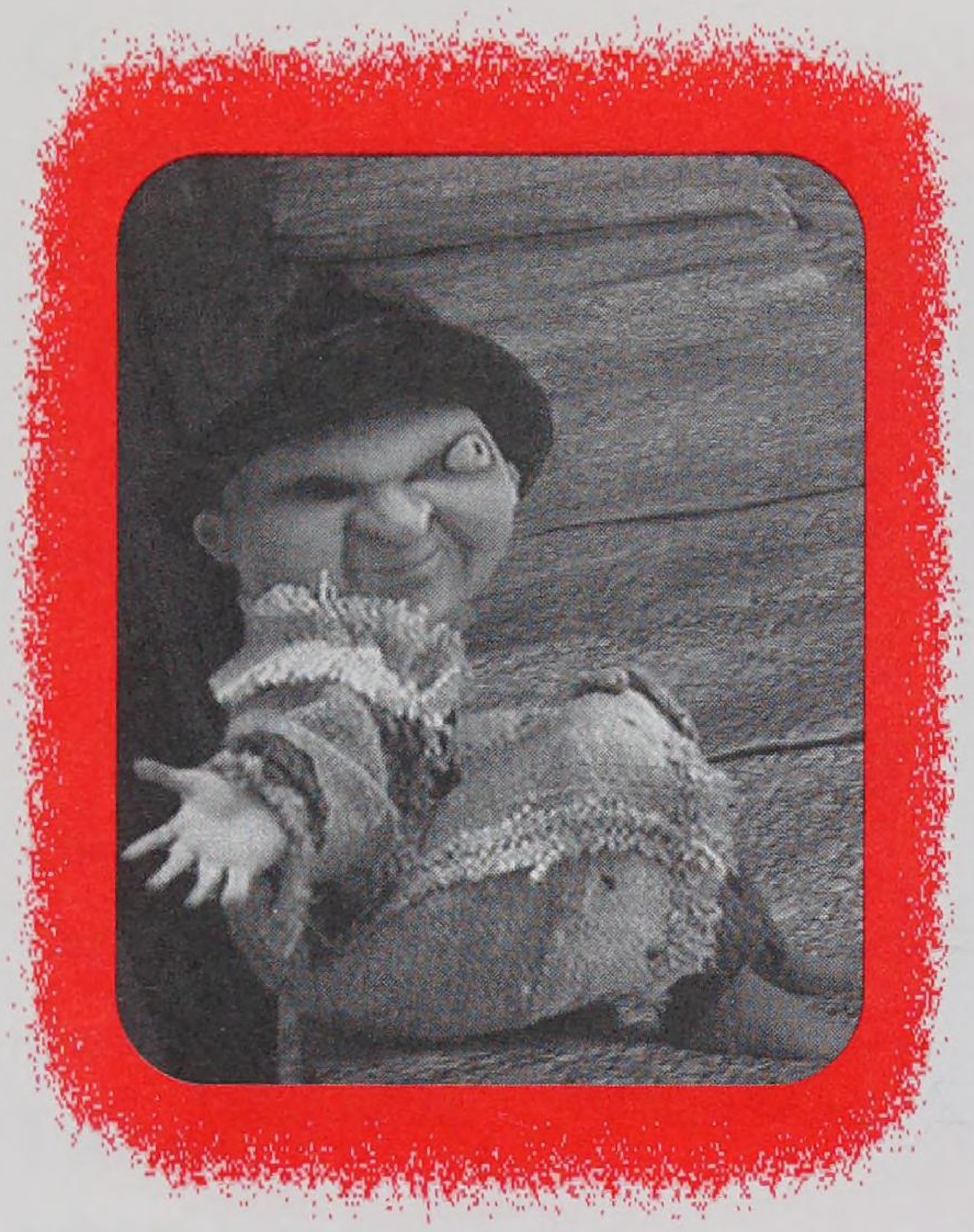
Daresay, does anyone question MY talent?

Speaking of which, where is that wretched Sycophant? He never fails to defer to my every whim, as well he should, that miserable oaf. As I approach, I spot a handsome charm about his neck. What is that he wears? That medallion mistakes him–he most certainly taunts me with stolen wealth. Charity from a criminal–I think not!



Giggling? Do I hear giggling? That can only be Emilia, a wench more giddy than my entire stable of mares. Smiling, I nod my acquaintance. One never knows when one might feel the need for a filly.

I grow weary of this inane chatter. What's that at the end of the bridge? That statue looks vaguely familiar. Its head is beautifully sculptured,



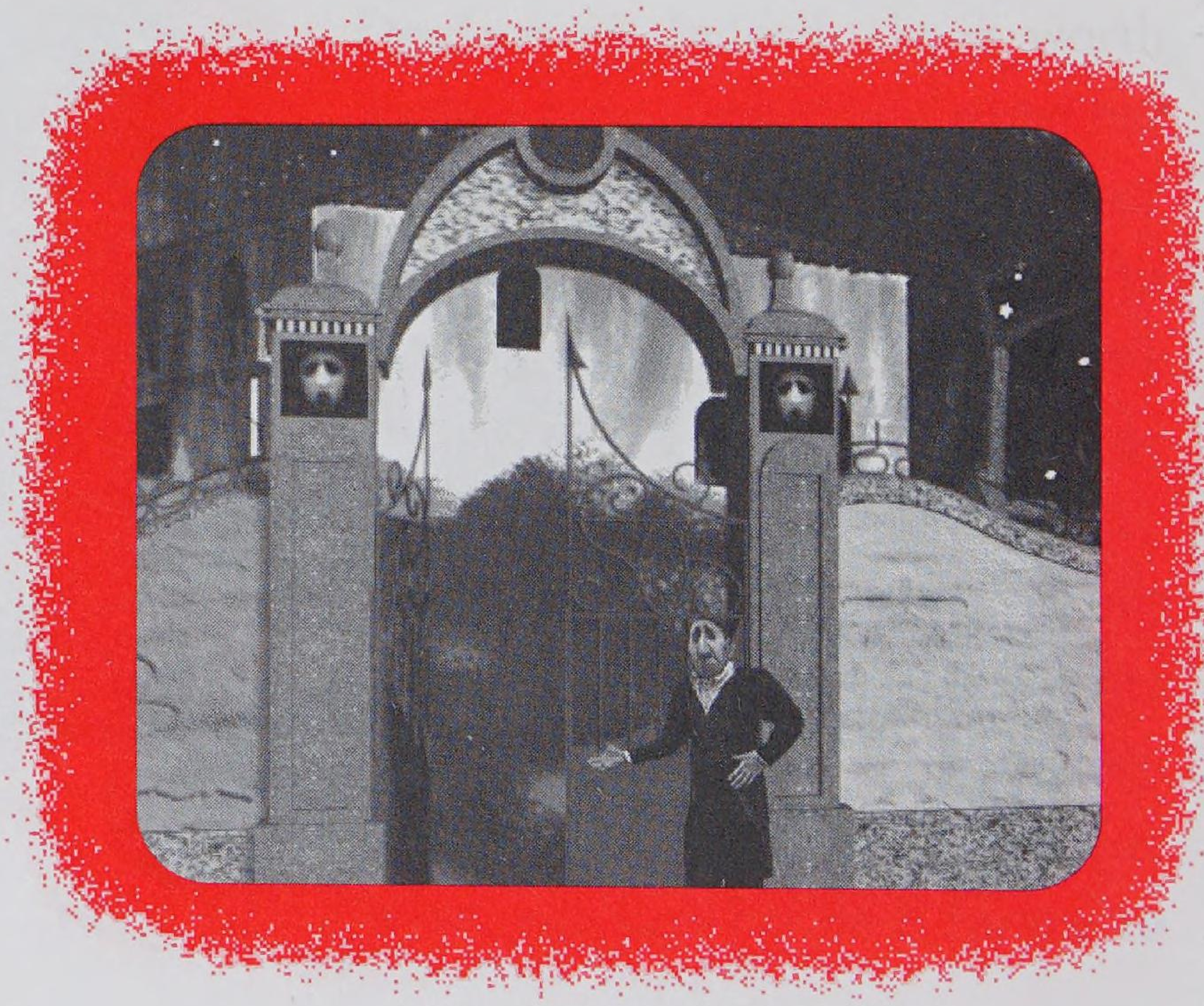
resembling . . . oh . . . never mind. God forbid I return home at this hour–familial obligations were never part of my grand scheme. Not with the luscious Desdemona standing before me. Ah, Desdemona . . . that robust, reassuring cleavage . . . I can almost reach out and. . . .

Time for a breath of fresh air. Careful not to get too close to that moronic Sycophant. That man across the bridge–he glares at me with such contention. Can he be Montresor? Stodgy old fool. Indeed, we've had our moments, but he is overcome with jealousy for the great Signore Fortunato. After all, who isn't?

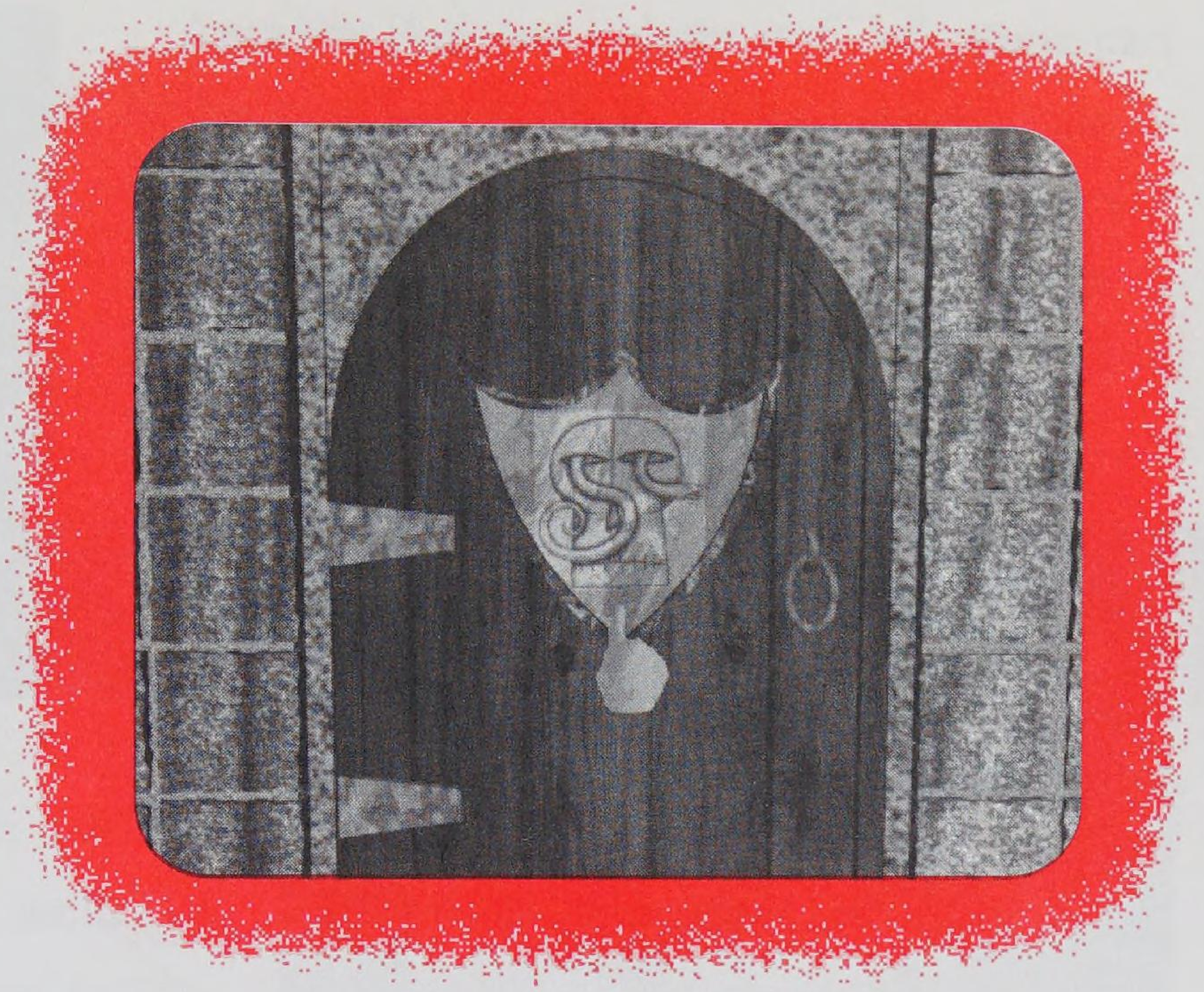
I grow weary of this charade. I do believe a stroll down the troddled path of this fair burg is in order. I do so love to allow the masses to partake of my dignity. What's this I find on my street corner? Another disgusting beggar! Society should discard these grotesque leftovers . . . less clutter on the streets. Ah, well. Onward and upward.

What an unpleasant surprise–I see upon closer inspection that the masked stranger is, indeed, Montresor. The poor bastard.

What's this? Montresor puts forth a smile for old Fortunato and an invitation too enticing to ignore. Of course, it's just as I

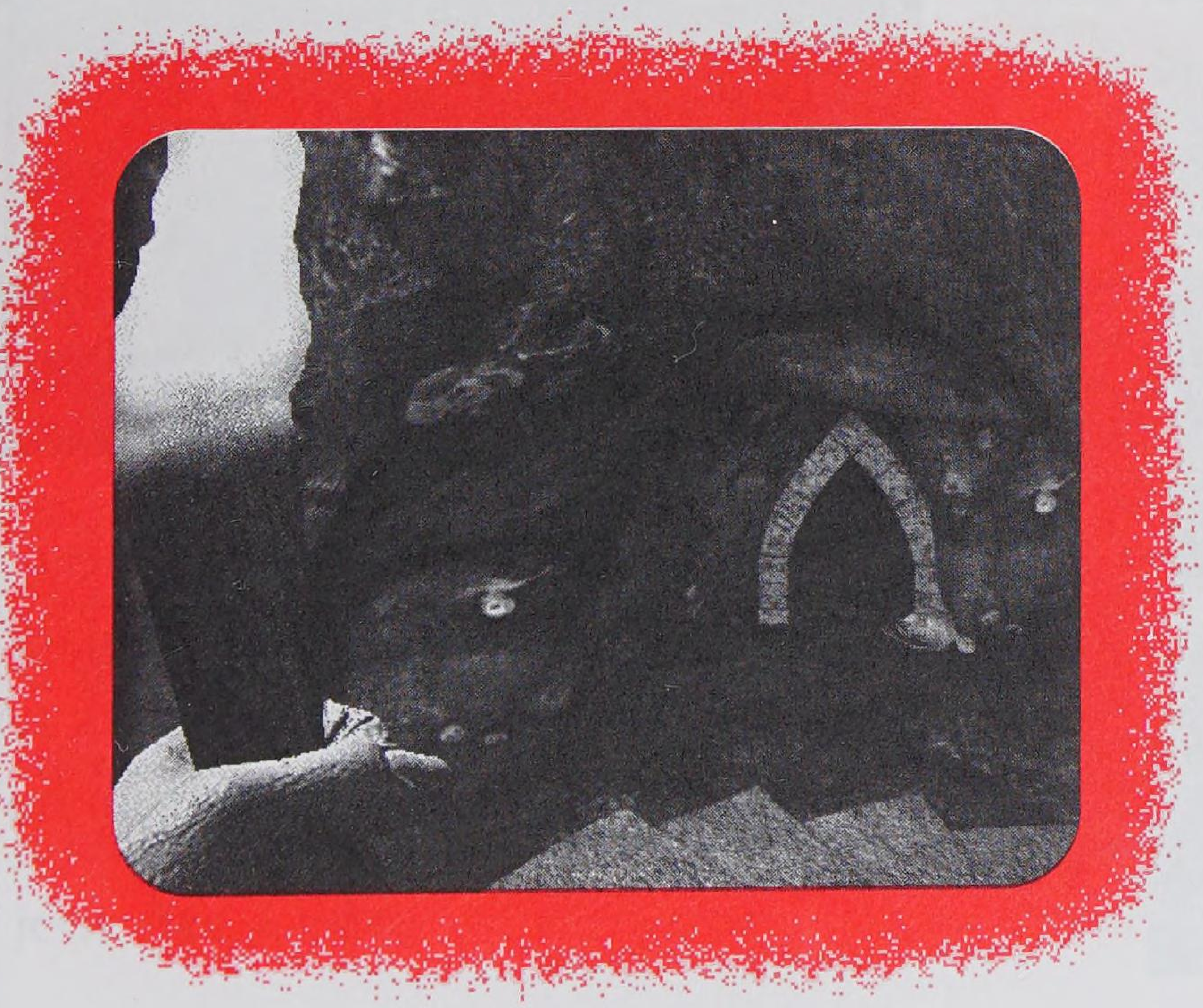


suspected–he seeks help from the almighty Fortunato. His proposition is rather intriguing. Amontillado, eh? Send this oaf to Luchesi–I have no time for such petty requests. Then again . . . it might mean a few free cupfuls, and Luchesi most assuredly has the palate of a hyena. What could it hurt? I shall go with the bumbling pagan to his villa.



. . .

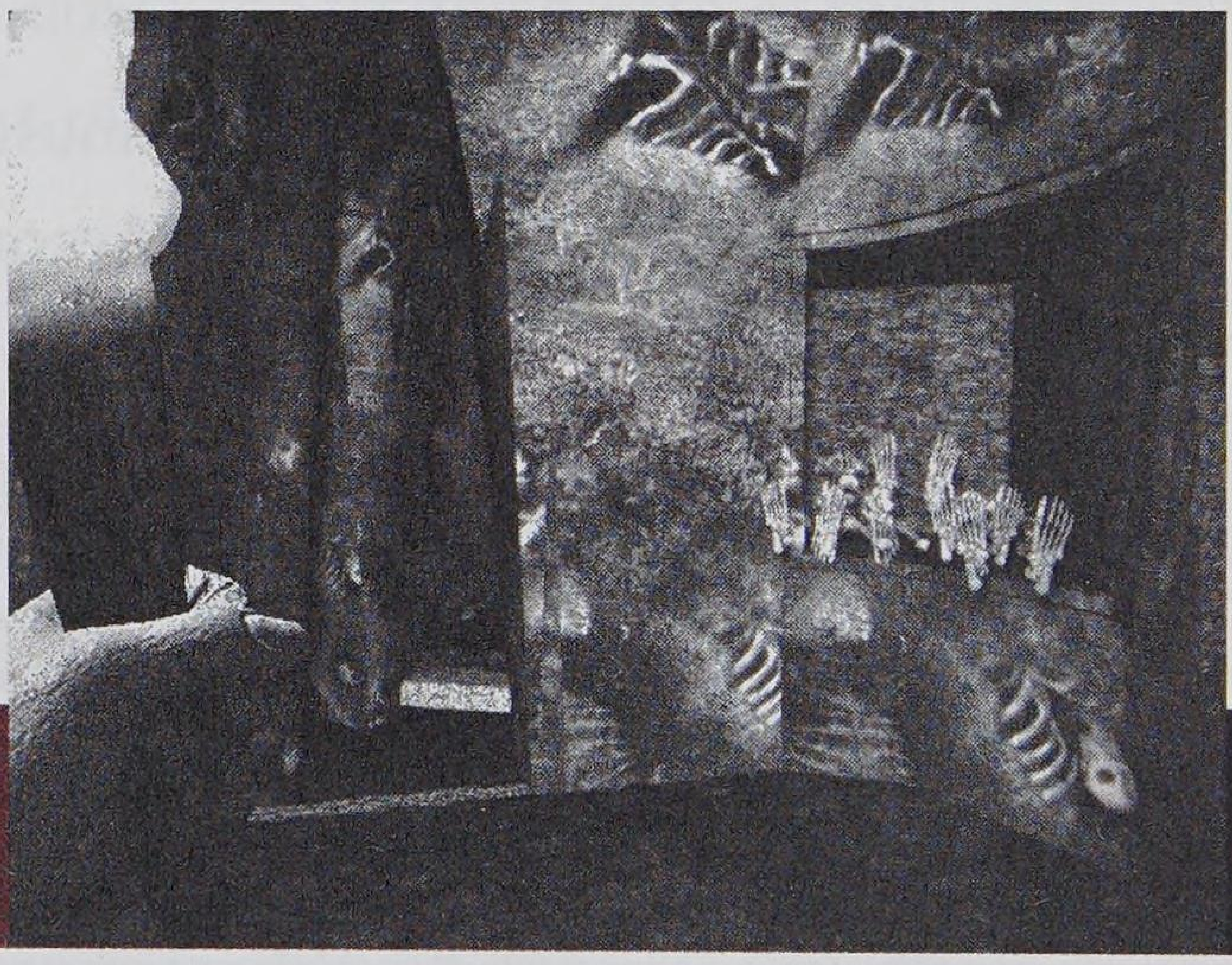
His villa is drab, this imbecile, he must be lacking. I suppose I can endure his repulsive company for the hour, if it truly is Amontillado he has in his vault. How dare he question my expertise. Hmpf. Dank cellar indeed!



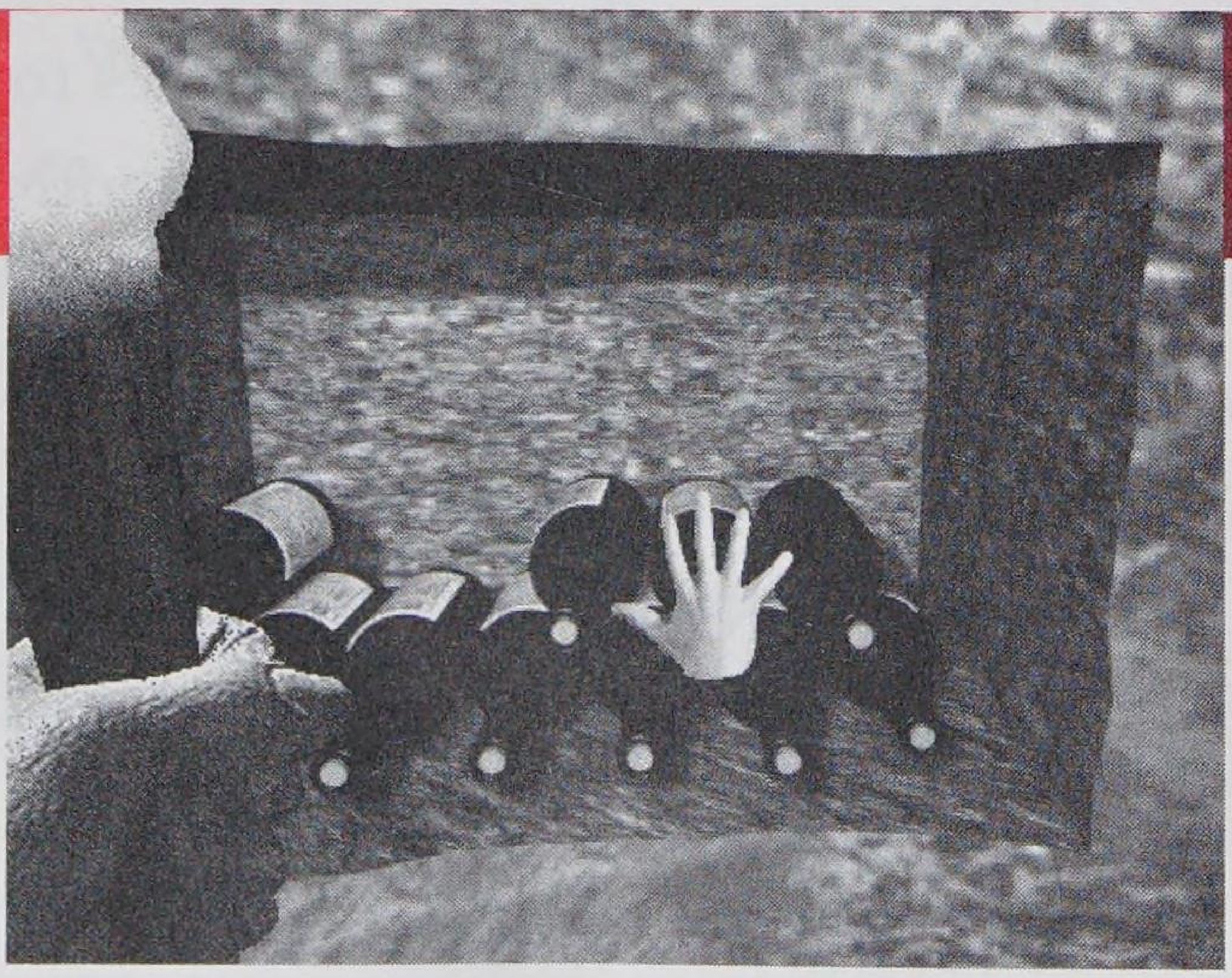
A coat of arms! Ha! No one harms him with impunity, eh? We shall see how much harm comes to this one if the Amontillado offends my palate. What an utterly horrific vault . . . and dark! Why could he not have thought to offer me a torch before I'd begun my descent? No brains, this one. Alright, point me to the torch, already, the Amontillado awaits.

A skeleton . . . lays loose on the floor of this hideous room. Oh well, to each his own fate. Where could that wine be hidden? Down the passageway on the right, you say? So be it. The sooner I get out of here, the better. The dampness is bone-chilling.

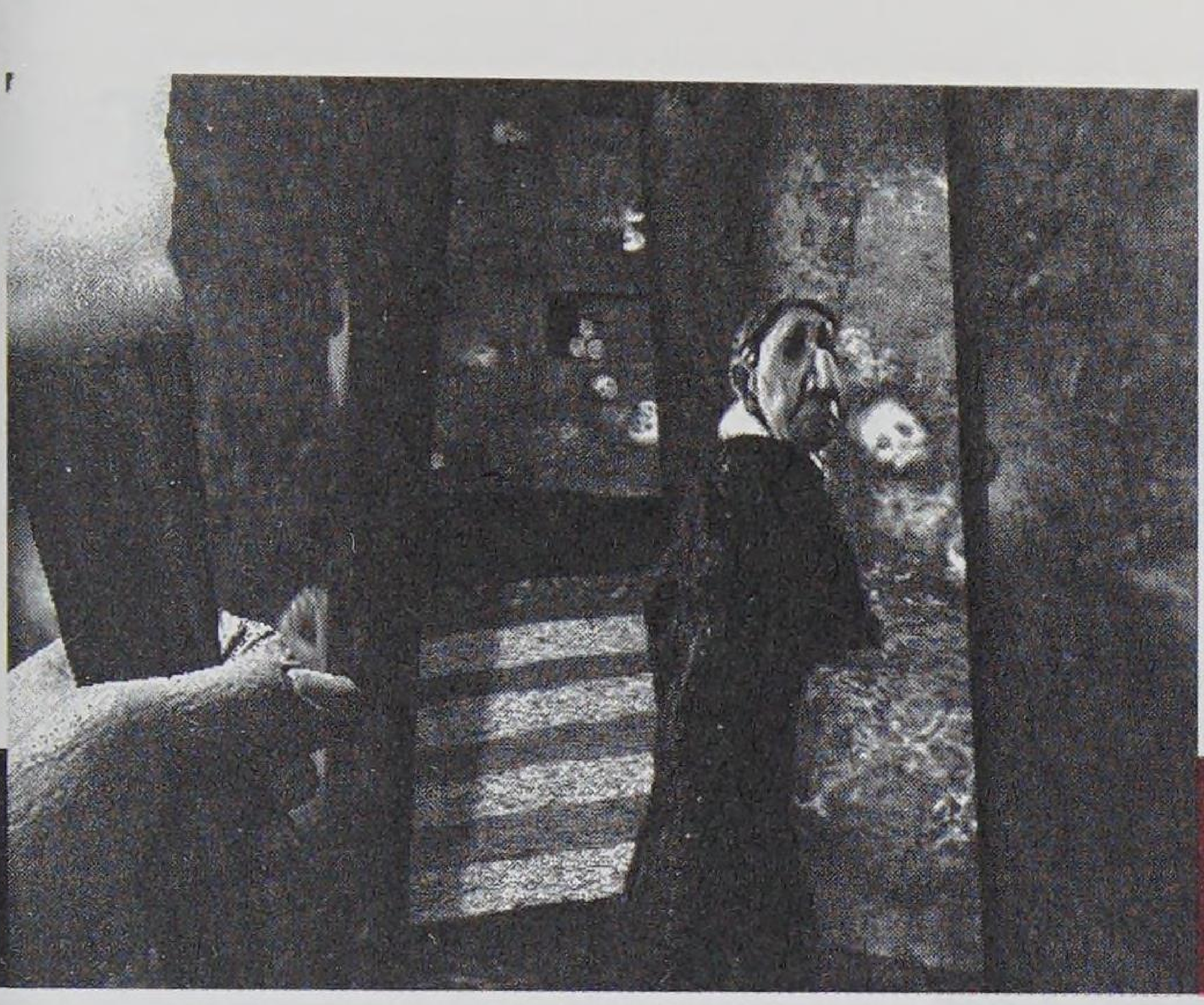
Look at that–his entire family piled up on top of one another. Repulsive. To the left, you say? Alright, couldn't be far now. A wine stash, at last! Give me that bottle.



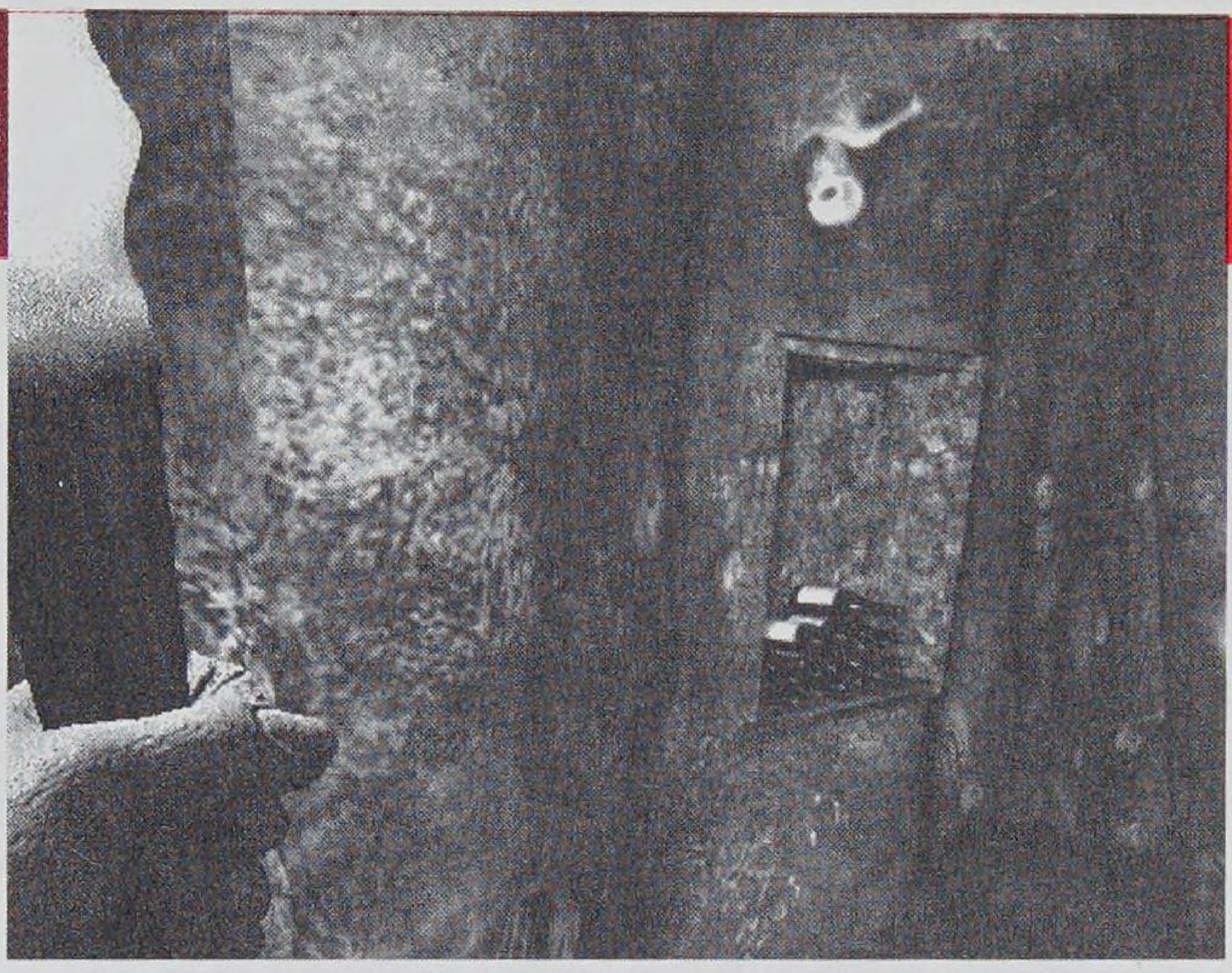
Hmmm. He's a strange one, this Montresor. After our past disputes, he drinks to my long life. What must he want from me? These family crypts are becoming unbearable, as is my cough. Perhaps this wasn't such a good idea.



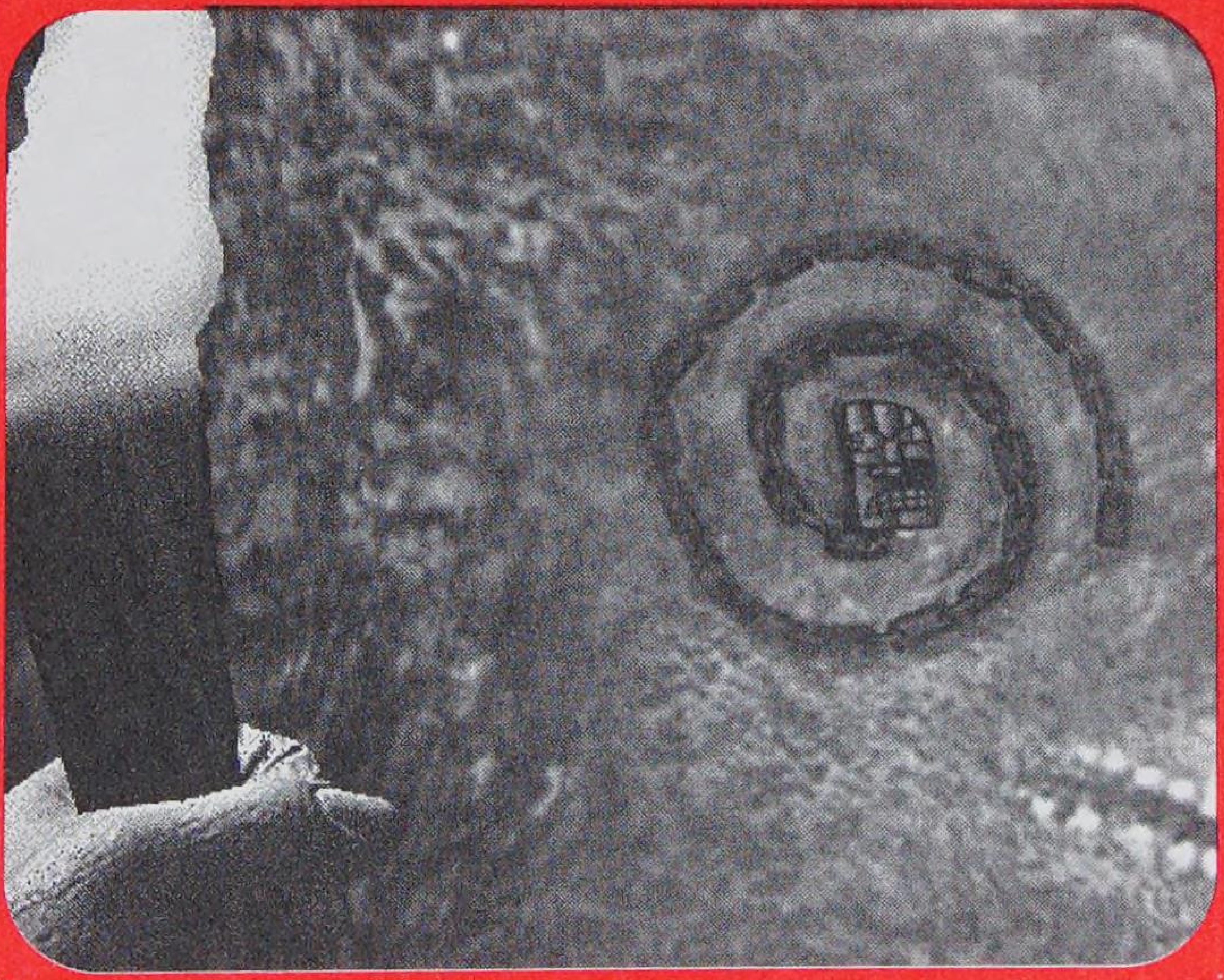
Then again, I see another wine stash up ahead. Wouldn't want to tarnish an exemplary reputation, but I should think best of it. It's so cold in here, and these blasted caverns go on forever.



Another skeleton–where in God's name can he be taking me? Well, I'll be bootswaggled–there on the wall, a Mason's insignia. Surely they don't accept the likes of Montresor? Enough chatter, you mindless curmudgeon! Where is this blessed Amontillado?



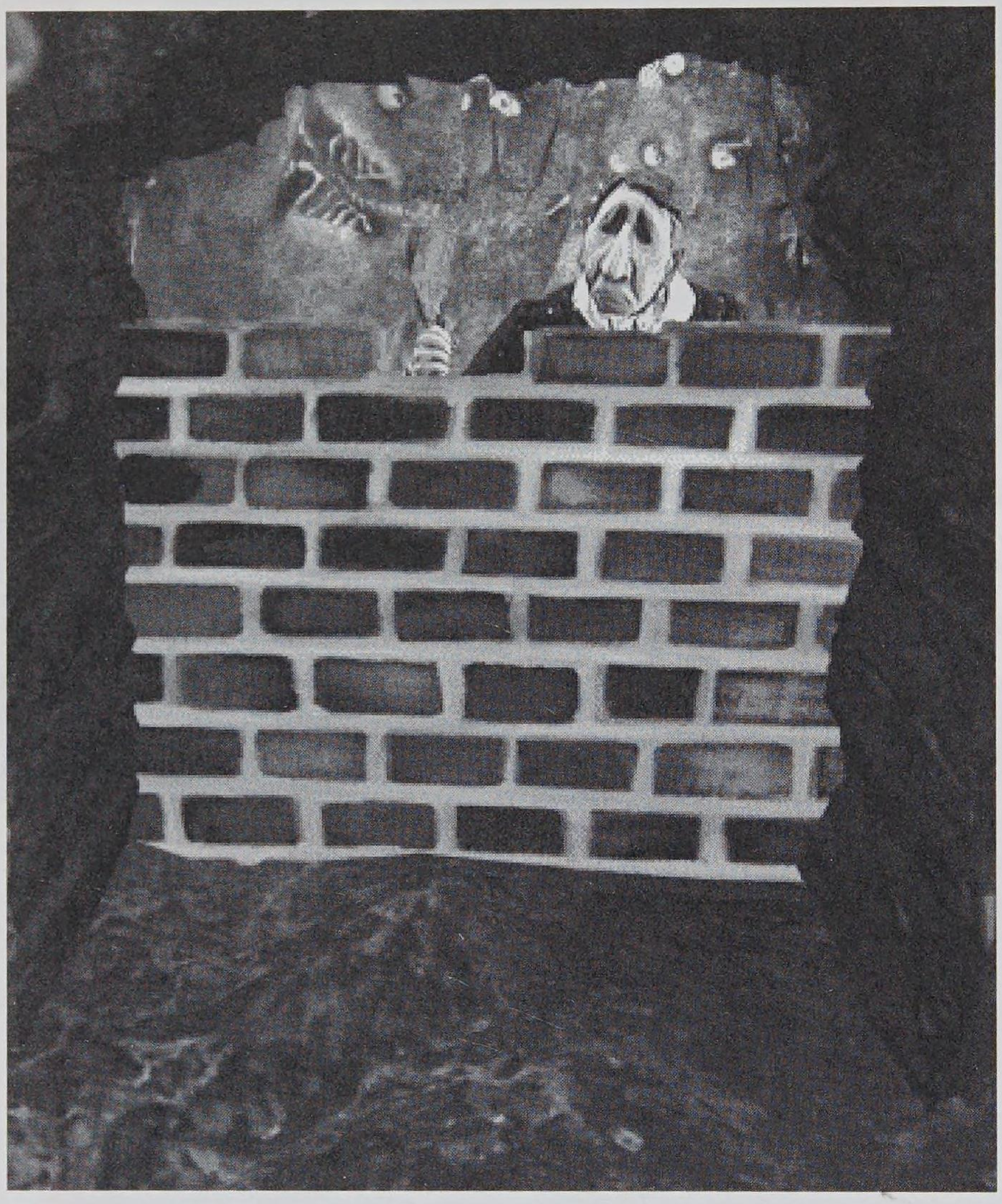
This cavern is disgusting, although it seems only fitting for the likes of him. Oh well, I've come this far. Finally a sconce for my torch–he should have been the one to carry it. Is that a bottle I spy in that small cave? I certainly deserve a sampling after all this. Let's see what's inside. . . .



Wait!
Why the chains?

The bottle is empty. Return? Yes, I would like to return. Now!

What is he doing with the trowel . . . those bricks? He's joking. Most assuredly, he jests. Yes, a joke.



My wife . . . she will no doubt be searching for me. Bricks . . . more bricks . . . dear God, he can't be. . . .

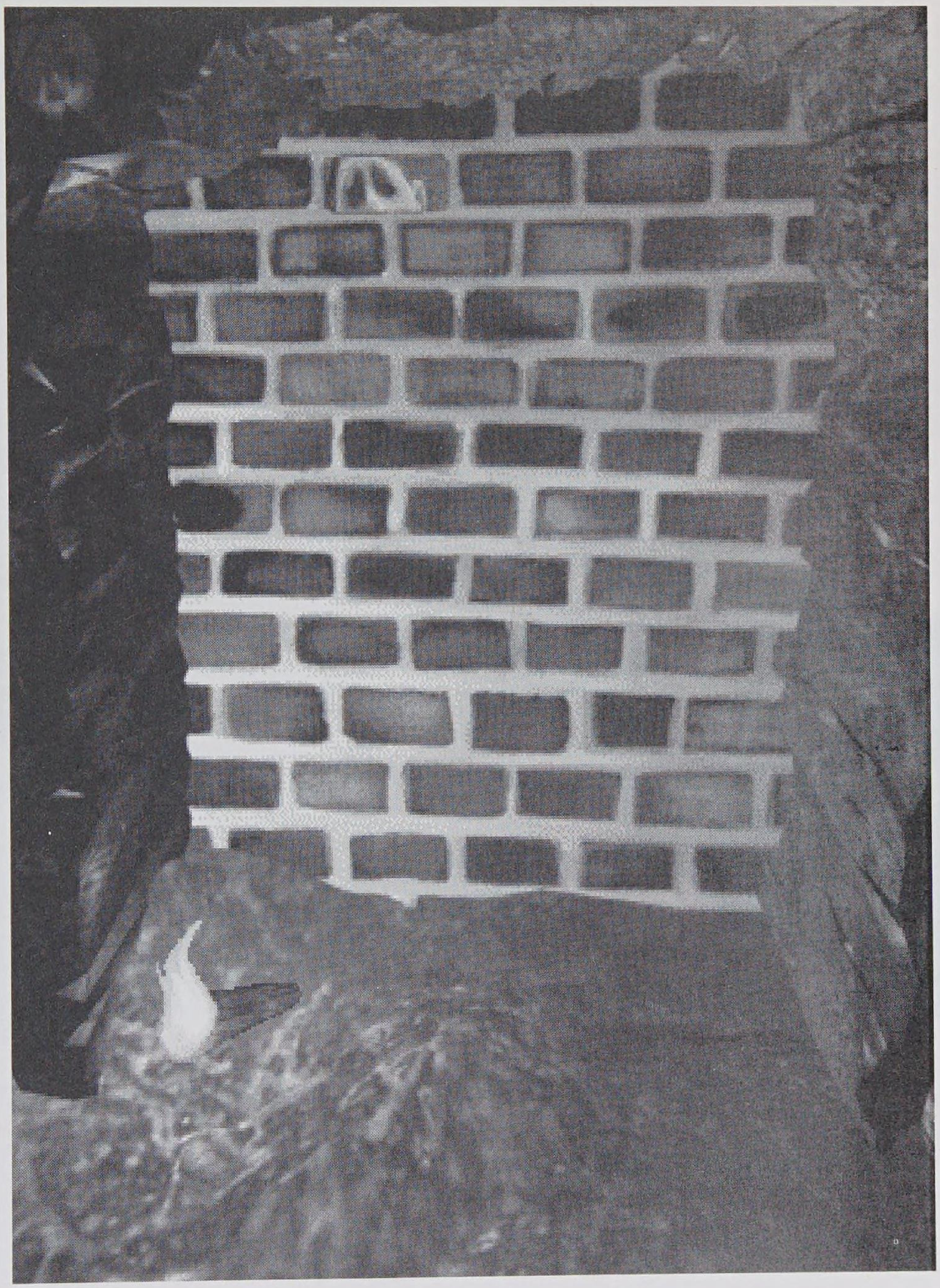
For the love of GOD ! ! ! !

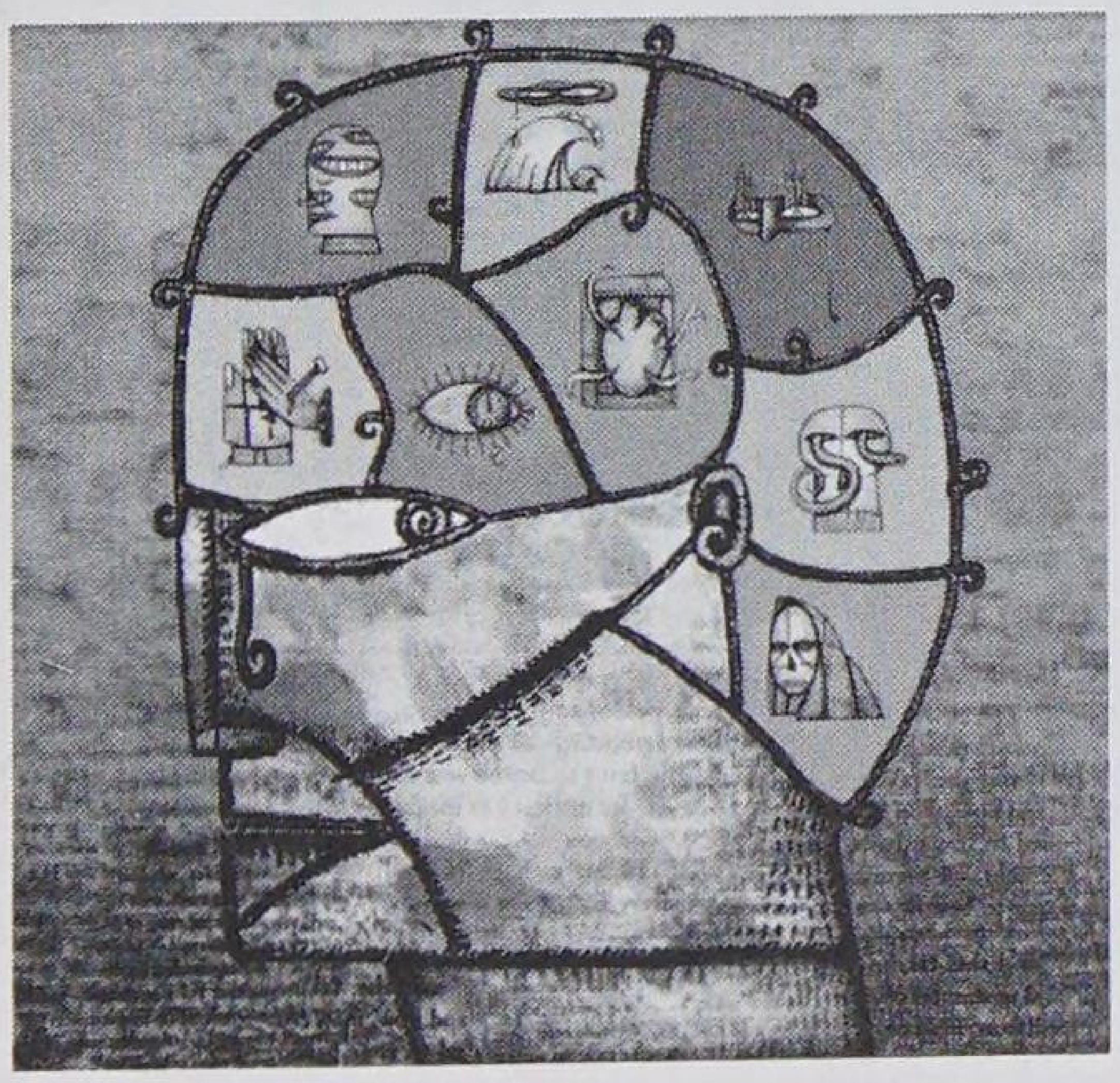
. . .

Calm, I will remain calm. The wall is complete. I must find a way out . . . tomorrow Luchesi and I will be rich beyond our wildest dreams. The bricks . . . can I reach out and touch them? What of this wine bottle? Perhaps I can free myself . . . maybe the shards. . . .

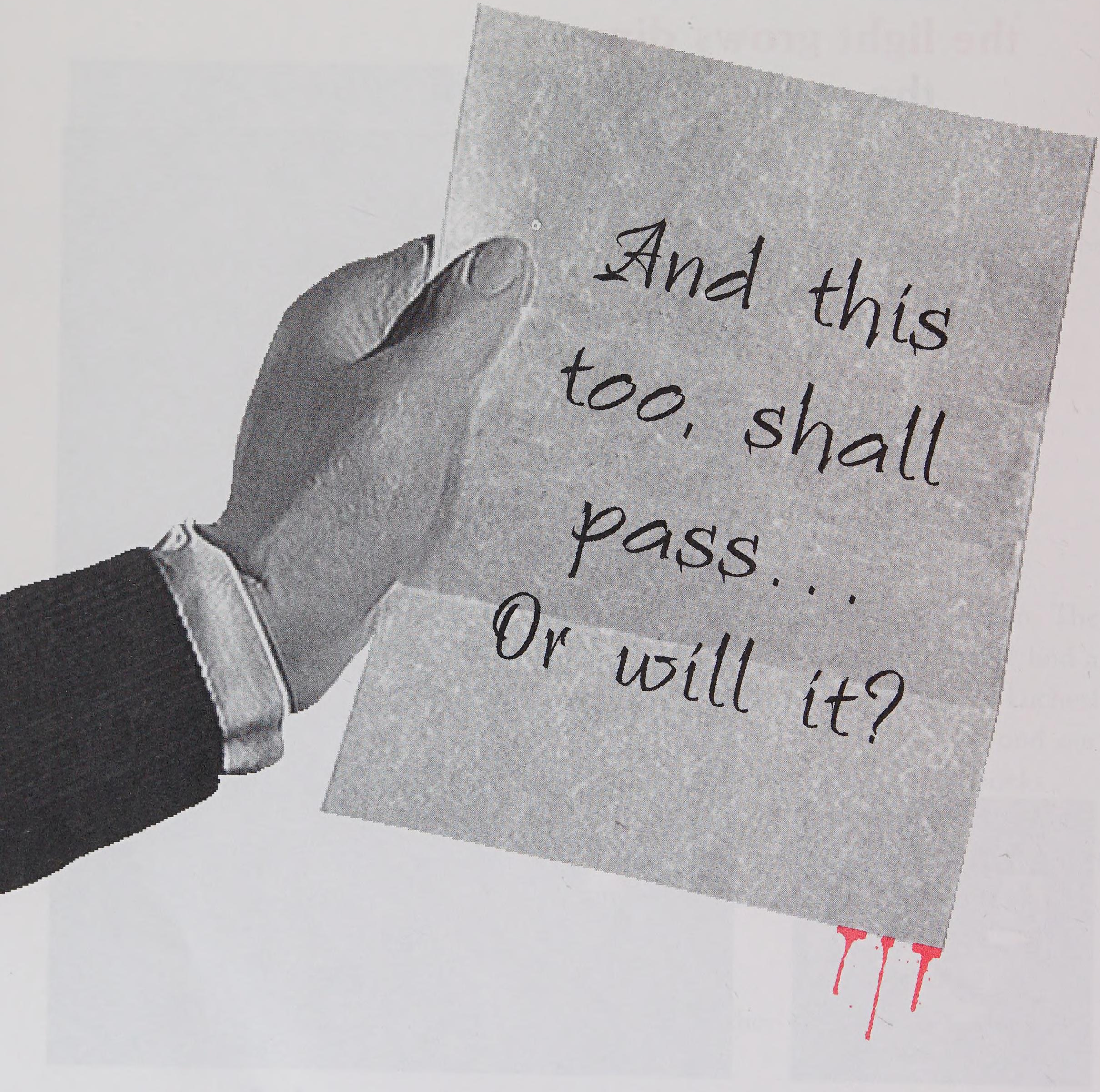
This skeleton. Surely it is a forgery.
Surely Desdemona will wait for me . . . my family . . . they will send for help.

The torch! It wanes . . .
the light grows dim . . .
the walls come tumbling down . . .

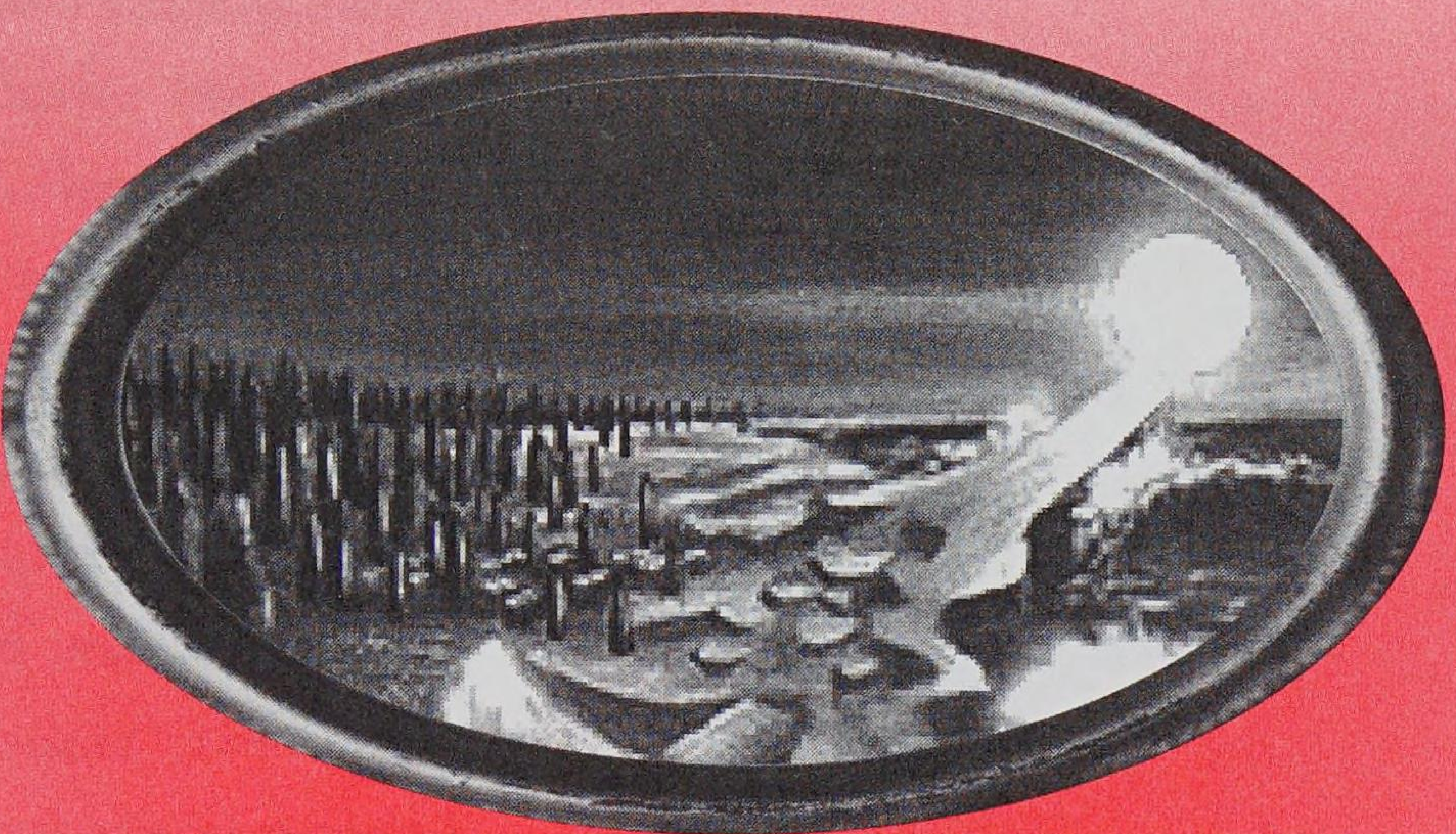




and down. . . .


And this
too, shall
pass...
Or will it?

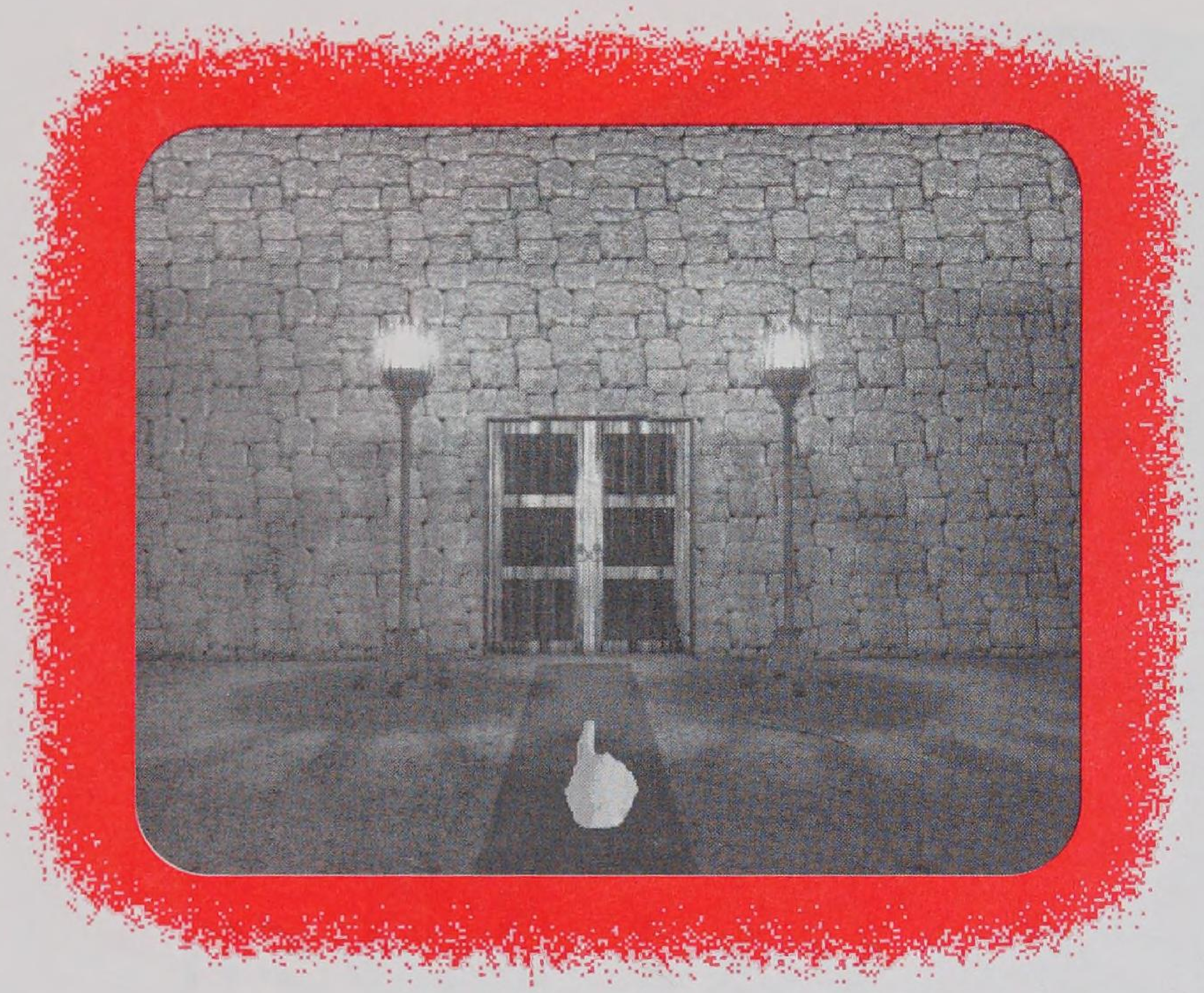
Chapter 13



Malevolence: Day Seven

October 14, 1872

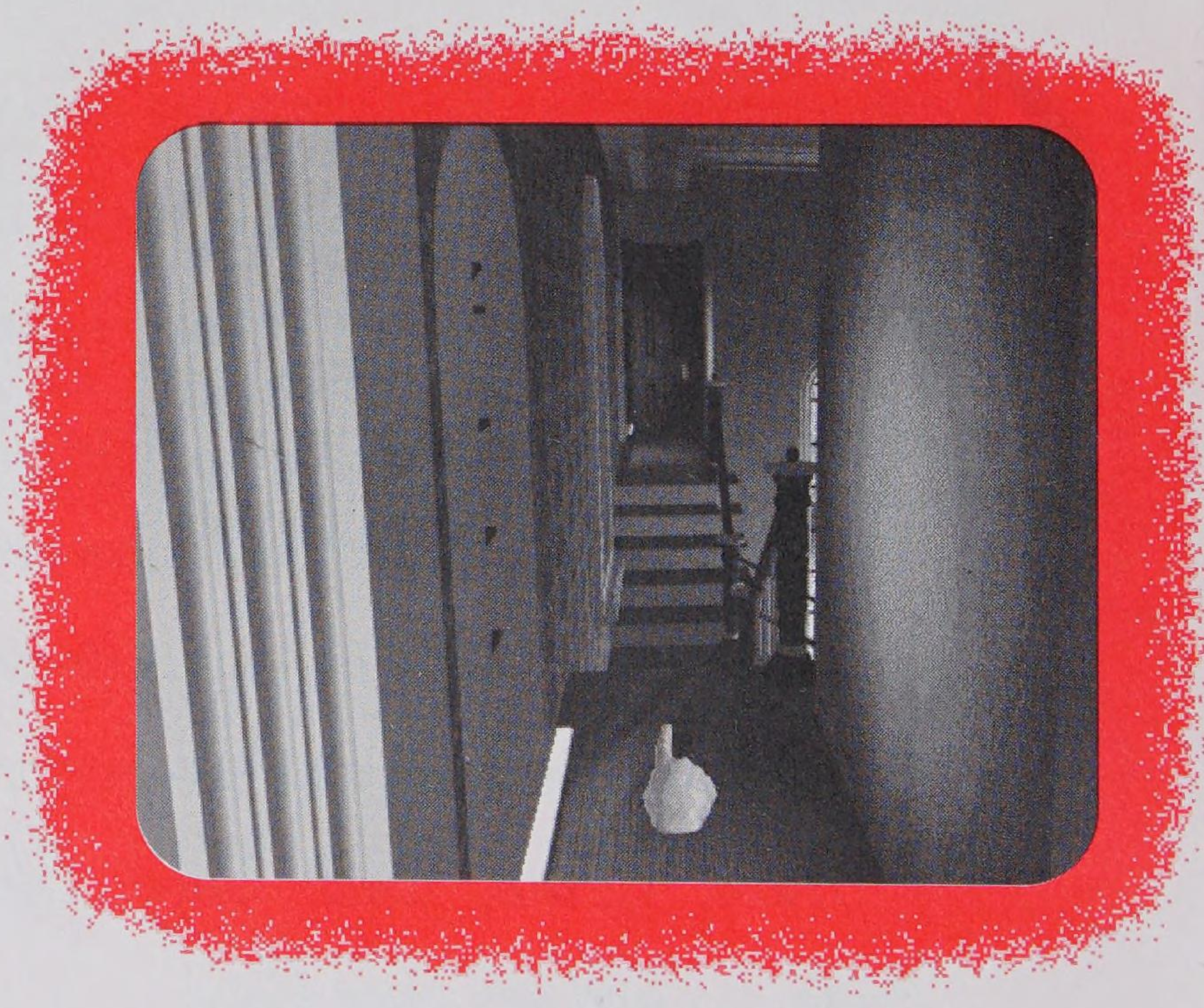
I am overcome by the destruction wrought by the toxic thoughts and desires that distort the minds and mutilate the souls of mankind. What sort of creatures are we that we wittingly administer poisons and injury unto ourselves and unto others with whom we share this troublesome existence? Throughout this week of terror, I have paid eyewitness, helpless to intervene, to the most despicable vindictives—performed in the unholy names of Greed, Wrath, Lust, Envy, Sloth, Gluttony, Revenge, Pride, . . . and yes, even Love.



Though the lines separating my conscious and unconscious remain blurred and jagged, the parallels between my waking and dream worlds have become devastatingly clear. Just as, in my nightstalking, the avaricious jester's unquenchable lust lured him to his "stoned," and perhaps deserving, internment—so, too, has my brother Henry fallen victim to his own craven aspirations and desires. And what of Edwin? Have not paranoid delusions and vain glory driven him to inflict perverse vengeance not unlike the masked mason who haunts my psyche?

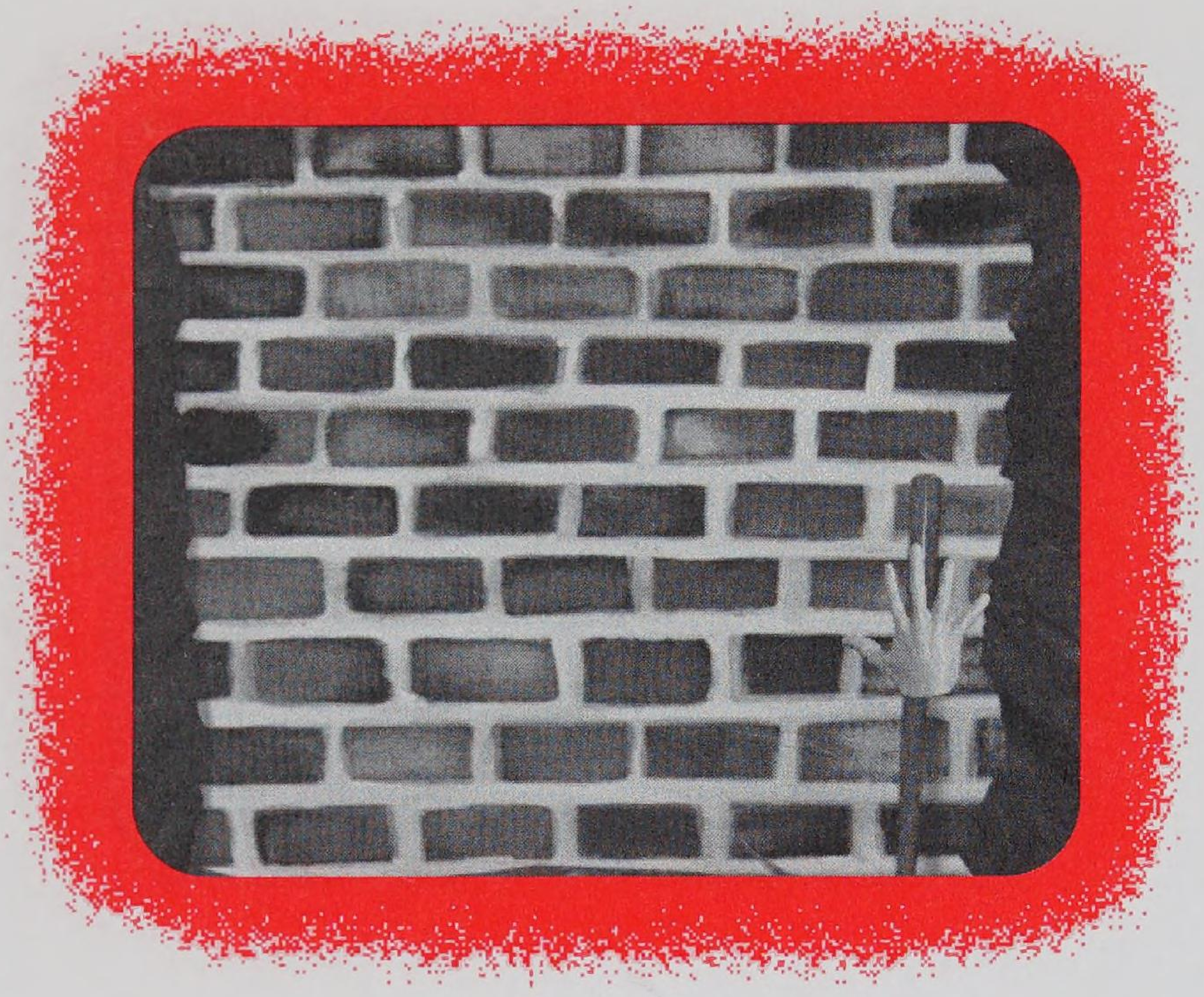
As I write this, a cold sweat engulfs me, my heart pounds in my chest, and my hand quivers with dread anticipation . . . of recounting the shattering events of this, my final day in Edwin's mansion, that I am about to pen.

. . .



I awoke abruptly from my terrifying night trance to find myself alone in a majestic *chamber whose impenetrable walls seemed to echo the primal scream, "Nooo! For the love of God!" I stood breathless, in awe, jolted by the sharp contrast of this monstrous throne room with the dark, dank confines of the brick tomb from which I had, seemingly, miraculously, escaped. This grand room appeared as the bloody torture chamber of another of my dream journeys, yet I was awake and lucid, or so I believed.*

Dumbfounded, I approached the tapestry descending from the towering ceiling. God help my soul, I was unprepared for the spectacle that accosted my sore eyes! There before me hung a hideous panoramic rendering of the debauchery infesting Edwin's mansion. It was then I recognized the place in which I stood as the abandoned ball room of Edwin's home. For countless years, this stately room had remained unused, its doors boarded, forbidding



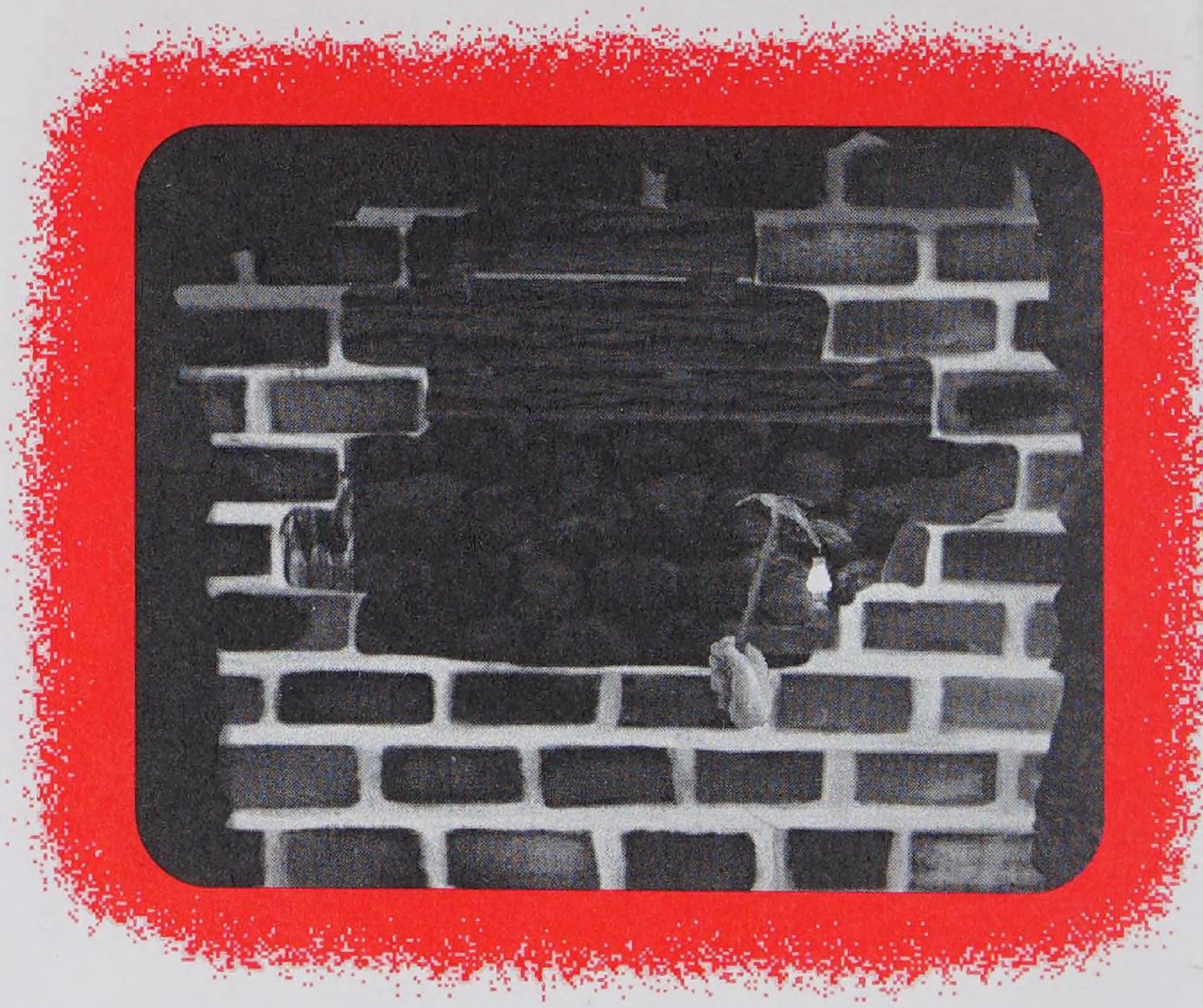
entry. I could not fathom how nor why I had gained entrance.

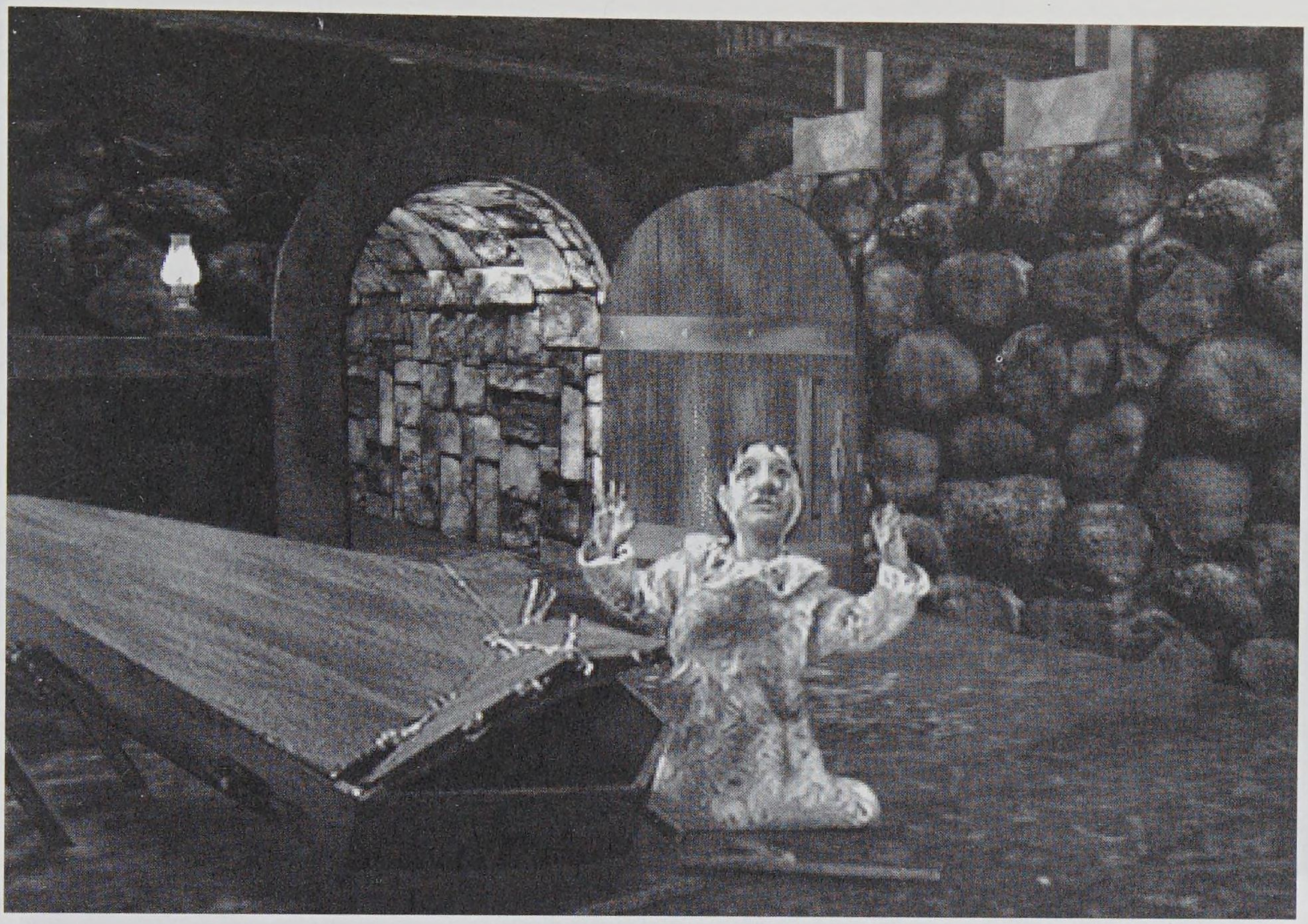
Fear quickly consumed me and propelled me to turn and make my hasty retreat, praying the doors were not still barred. I pushed through the doors and ran out. . . .

Inexplicably, I entered into . . . Dear God, or Satan, or whatever had taken control of my destiny . . . a terrifyingly familiar, yet strange, very strange time and place. . . .

My pulse and pace quickening, I raced from room to room . . . from dimension to dimension . . . driven onward by terror, sheer terror, as if Lucifer himself bit at my heels . . . as the sound of Edwin's voice reverberating menacingly from the walls . . . and my sanity slipped from my grasp. . . .

Then to my supreme agitation, I dashed nearly headlong into a towering wall of brick . . . abruptly halting my frenzied flight. Momentarily paralyzed with panic, I turned left and right . . . to and fro . . . No escape. It was then I spotted a pickaxe nearby.



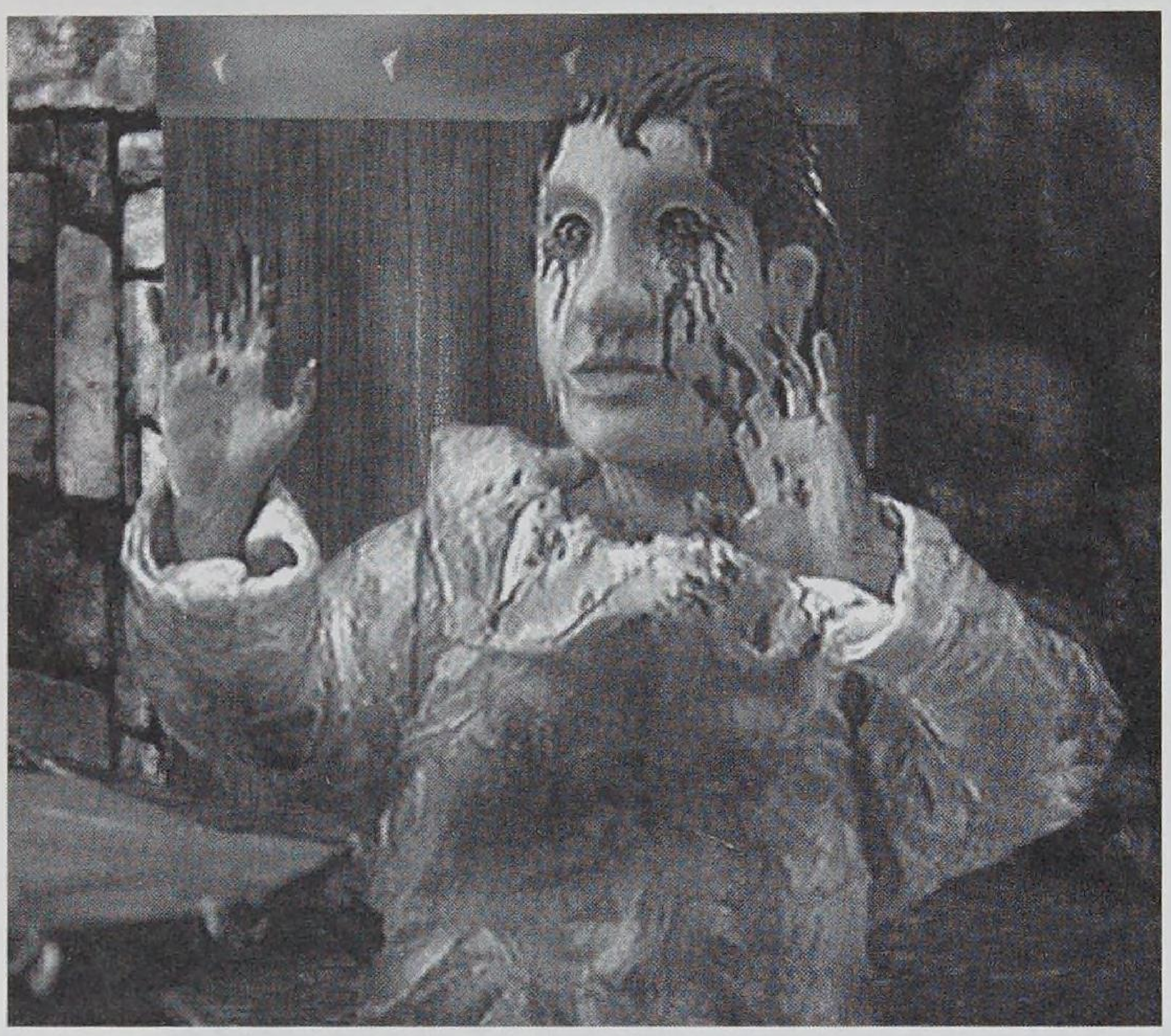


Without another moment's hesitation, I grasped the pickaxe firmly in my trembling hands . . . and thrust it with all my might against the brick wall . . . to no avail . . . With feverish intent, I raised the instrument of destruction and again brought it down hard against the solid masonry . . . striking it again . . . and again . . . and again . . . until brick by brick . . . the barrier to my freedom, my sanity, my very life . . . broke away.

Nothing . . . nothing on this Earth, this plane of existence could have prepared me for the ghastly sight that greeted me beyond the remains of that brick wall. I stepped through, and there . . .

next to her broken, toppled coffin . . .
knelt Elise . . . poor, dear Elise . . .
the empty sockets,

where once her joyful eyes glistened, dripping blood . . .



her blood-soaked hands, having gouged her sore eyes from her own head, reaching out blindly in innocent delirium. . . . Sweet Mother of God, I can see her still!

Suddenly, the pieces of my shattered psyche coalesced and in that instant, I understood the full import of it all: the paintings, the hallucinations, the premonitions, the psychosis. The murderous villain—the dementia-inducing fumes—revealed itself to me . . . too late.

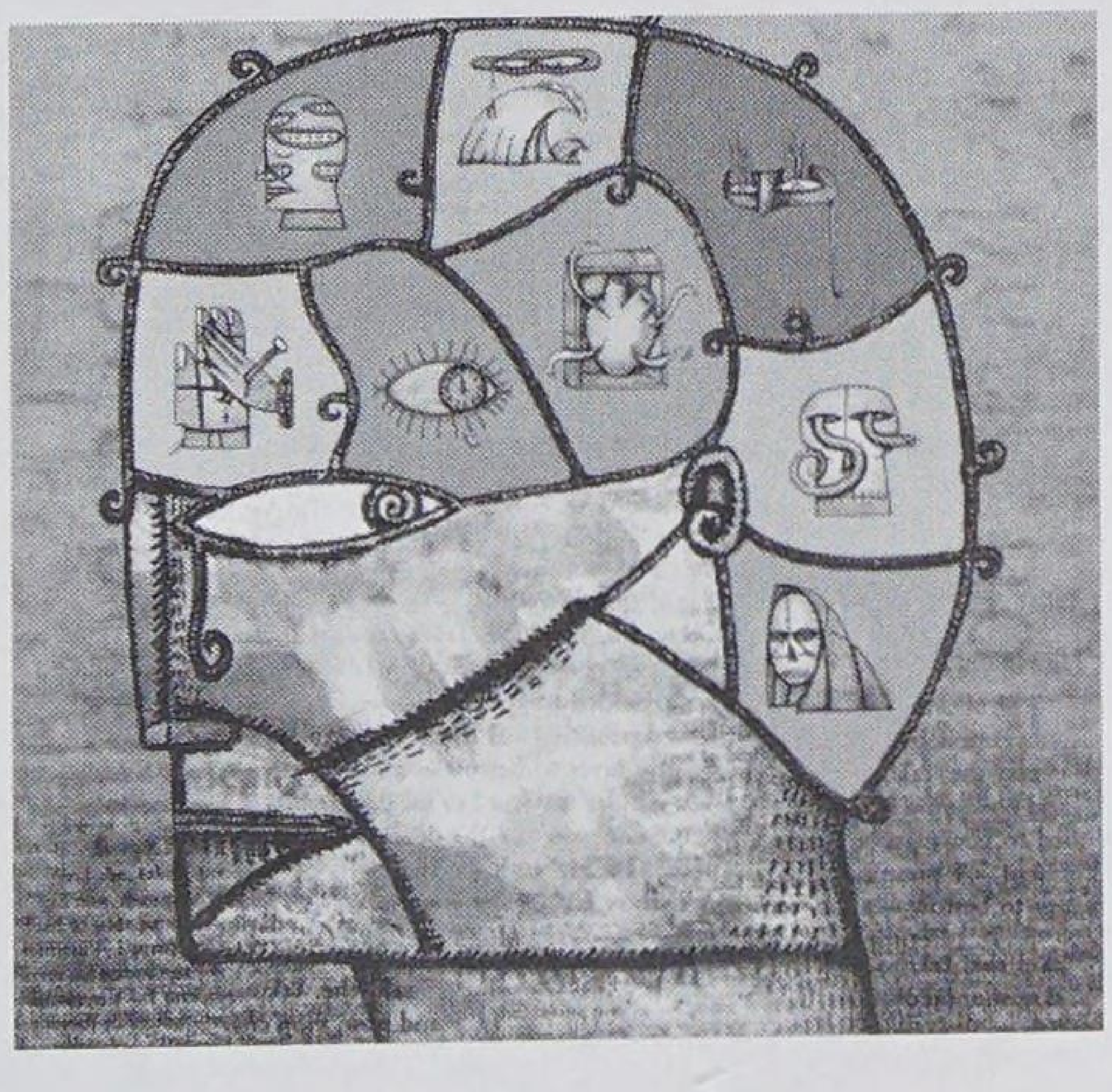
As my soul collapsed within itself at the horror of my revelation, a thunderous rending pierced the silence and shook the walls of the mansion . . . increasing in magnitude as it ripped through the house and my veins . . . breaking apart the foundation of my very soul . . . and this mansion of malevolence.

. . .

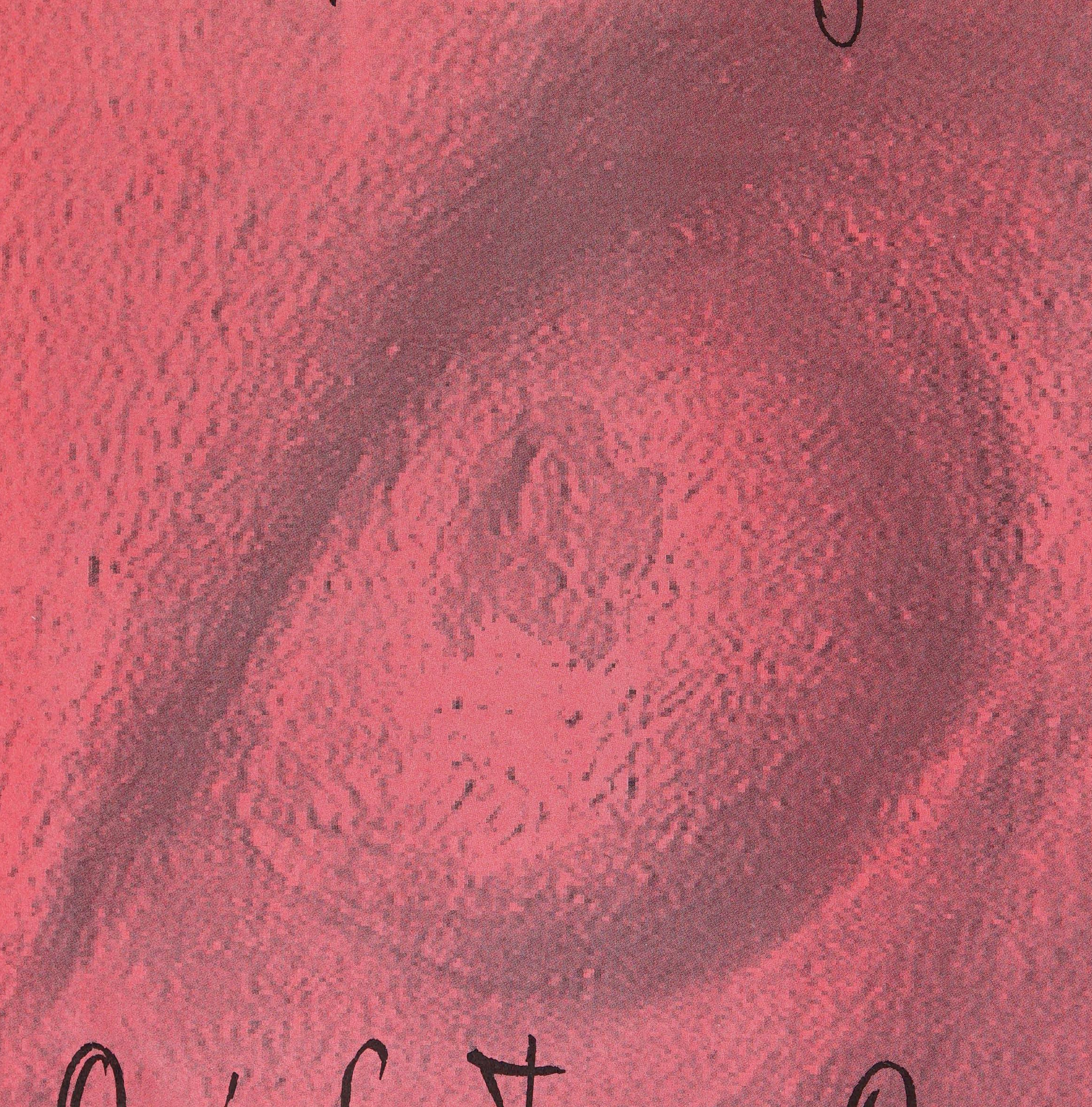
This journal and a handful of images pasted in a family album are all that remain of Edwin's mansion, my family, and the pestilence which led to their hideous doom that fated October of 1872. For these many years since, I have wandered alone, these haunting memories buried, as they should be and shall remain, deep within the recesses of my brain . . . seen only by the dark eye of my tortured mind, which defies sleep but never fully wakens.

You shall hear of me no more, nor shall I utter my family name or speak again of the terrifying events that did, indeed, take place. Know me only as the Journeyer, who walks amongst you silently . . . unobserved . . . ever watchful. . . .

For malice abounds. Evil does live. And nothing is as it seems.



The Dark Eye



Quick Tour One

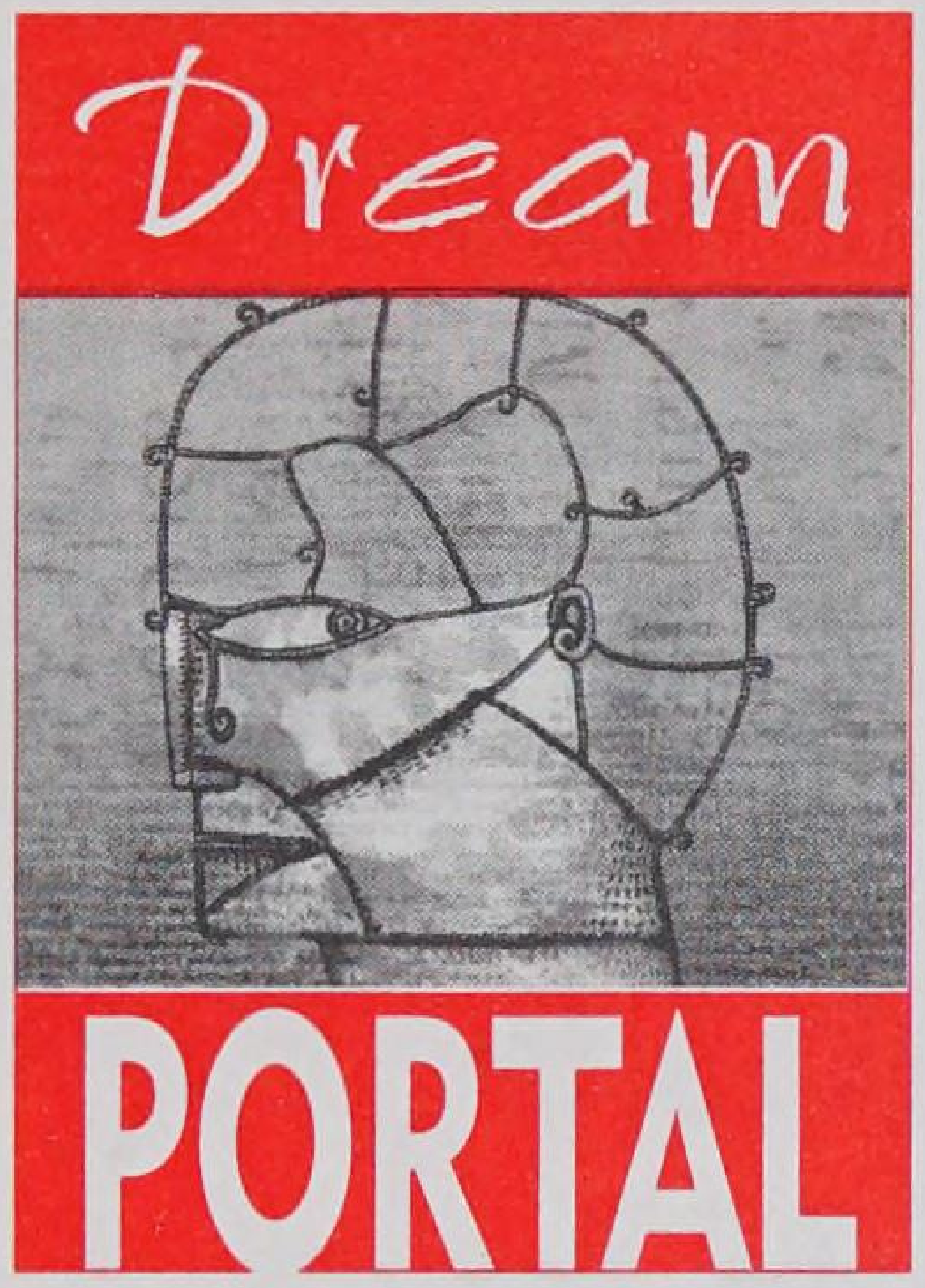
Quick Tour One

Among the many totally cool features of *The Dark Eye* is its unique nonlinear structure–which, incidentally, presents one of its greatest challenges. This Quick Tour gives you a step-by-step walkthrough covering all of the required actions you must take to move the game forward and play it to its climactic end.

Before we get into how to use this Quick Tour, let us first go over the structure of *The Dark Eye* and how you play the game. Otherwise, you're apt to experience more frustration than entertainment as you play the game.

The Dark Eye comprises a total of seven scenarios and two graphic novels. You can complete all but one of the scenarios, Malevolence, in any order. Here's the catch: You weave in and out of Malevolence, playing its first "sequence" in the "waking" world, then a dream scenario, then back to Malevolence for round two, then on to another dream scenario, etc. Does this sound twisted? Yeah! Our kind of fun!

You play Malevolence in a "waking" state as the Journeyer. You play the six scenarios in a dreamstate. These six dream scenarios are based on three infamous tales by Edgar Allan Poe. You play two scenarios for each Poe-based tale: one as the villain and one as the victim.

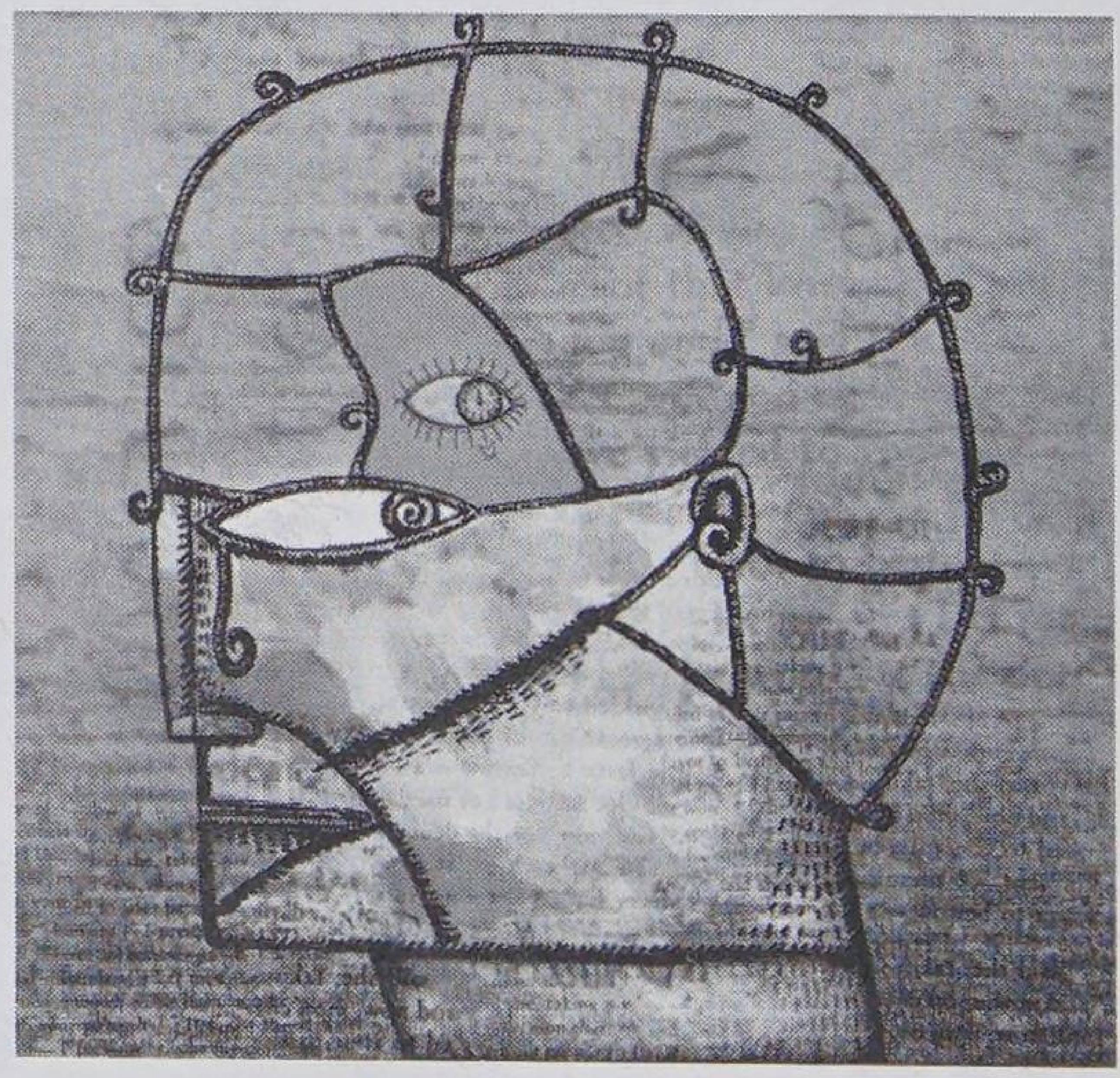


OK, got that? The next section of this Quick Tour describes the Dream Portals you use to enter each of the six dream scenarios from Malevolence. You'll want to refer to this section each time you fade into a dreamstate after completing a sequence of Malevolence.

The second section takes you through the Malevolence scenario itself. A Dream Portal appears at the end of the walk-through of each Malevolence sequence. This signals you that it's time to enter the dream scenario of your choice. When you complete a dream scenario, the game automatically pops you back to Malevolence to begin the next sequence. Just remember which sequence you completed before you went to la-la land.

Following the Malevolence walkthrough, we explain how to enter and complete the graphic novels.

The Quick Tour includes a separate part for each Poe-based tale, each containing two walkthroughs: one for the villain scenario and one for the victim scenario. A Malevolence Portal appears at the end of each dream scenario walkthrough, signaling you that it's time to go back to Malevolence.



The Dream Portals

After completing a sequence of Malevolence, your waking world dims to a blue-hued twilight, your fond relatives disappear, and whispering voices echo through the mansion. This signals your transition to a dreamstate in which you must next enter, or return to, one of the six dream scenarios. Think of this transition as a semiconscious state like the one you fall into just before entering REM sleep, when the lines between your real and dream worlds blur.

The game automatically switches to this dreamstate whenever you complete a full scene (sequence) of Malevolence. Each time you fall into this state, you must then activate any one of the six dream scenarios. You always enter a scenario the same way, from the same Dream Portal to that particular dream scenario. (However, you can re-enter a scenario from the Phrenology Map by clicking on its icon; see Part One of this guide for details).

Though you must go through one of these portals at each of several points in the Malevolence scenario, they are described only once below.

Remember, you must play each of the three dream tales twice, once as the villain and once as the victim. You can enter and complete these scenarios in any sequence. You are still in the Malevolence mansion during the dream transition state. Each dream tale takes place in its own unique environment.

Tell-Tale Heart Dream Portals

You enter each of the Tell-Tale Heart scenarios through the Kitchen of the Malevolence mansion.

TELL-TALE–VILLAIN PORTAL

Dream Portal to play Tell-Tale as the villain, the Boarder.

This Dream Portal takes you into the Tell-Tale Heart dream scenario with you playing the role of the villain, an unnamed Boarder whom we've dubbed *Norman*.

Here's what you do:

1. **Go to the Kitchen.**
2. **Open the door. Enter.**
3. **Approach the butcher block.**
4. **Approach the cleaver.**
5. **Caress your (the Journeyer's) reflection on the cleaver.**

The Tell-Tale Heart dream scenario played through the villain's point of view begins. A collage of images from this tale flash on the screen. Then, a gilded mirror appears on a green textured wall, reflecting Norman's image. Refer to the Tell-Tale Heart section of this Quick Tour for a run-through of this scenario.

TELL-TALE–VICTIM PORTAL

Dream Portal to play Tell-Tale as the victim, the Old Man.

This Dream Portal takes you into the Tell-Tale Heart dream scenario with you playing the role of the victim, an unnamed Old Man whom we've christened *Cy* (short for Cyclops).

Here's how you get there from Malevolence:

1. **Go to the Kitchen.**
2. **Open the door. Enter.**
3. **Approach the butcher block.**
4. **Close-in on the fish.**
5. **Caress your (the Journeyer's) reflection in the fish eye.**

The Tell-Tale Heart dream scenario played through the Old Man's point of view begins. A collage of images from this tale flash on the screen. Then, a gilded mirror appears on a green textured wall, reflecting Cy's pitiful image. Refer to the Tell-Tale Heart section of this Quick Tour for a run-through of this scenario.

Berenice

You find both of the Berenice Dream Portals in the Library of the Malevolence mansion.

BERENICE–VILLAIN PORTAL

Dream Portal to play Berenice as the villain, Egaeus.

This Dream Portal takes you into the Berenice dream scenario with you playing the role of the villain, an obsessive-compulsive sort named Egaeus.

To get there from Malevolence, follow the steps on the following page.

1. **Go to the Library.**
2. **Move to the desk.**
3. **Approach the letter opener.**
4. **Caress the Journeyer's reflection on the letter opener.**

The Berenice dream scenario played through the villain's point of view begins. A collage of images from this tale flash on the screen. Then, the letter opener appears on the desk of Egaeus, located in his Study. Refer to the Berenice section of this Quick Tour for a run-through of this scenario.

BERENICE–VICTIM PORTAL

Dream Portal to play Berenice as the victim, Berenice.

This Dream Portal takes you into the Berenice dream scenario as the victim, none other than Berenice herself.

Just follow this short path from the Malevolence mansion:

1. **Go to the Library.**
2. **Approach the bird cage.**
3. **Caress the Journeyer's reflection on the bird cage.**

The Berenice dream scenario played through the victim's point of view begins. A collage of images from this tale flash on the screen. Then, a vanity mirror reflecting Berenice's woeful likeness appears on the screen. Refer to the Berenice section of this Quick Tour for a run-through of this scenario.

Cask of Amontillado–Villain Portal

The two Cask Dream Portals are located in the Conservatory of the Malevolence mansion.

CASK–VILLAIN PORTAL

Dream Portal to play Cask as the villain, Montresor.

This Dream Portal takes you into the Cask of the Amontillado dream scenario with you playing the role of the villain, Montresor.

Follow these steps to this dream world:

1. **Go to the Conservatory.**
2. **Open the door. Enter.**
3. **Approach the wine bottle on the table.**
4. **Caress the Journeyer's reflection on the wine bottle.**

The fastest and easiest way we've found to get to the wine bottle is to first approach the window, turn toward the table, then down-click.

The Cask of the Amontillado dream scenario played through the villain's point of view begins. A collage of images from this tale flashes on the screen. Then, a jewelry merchant's window appears, reflecting Montresor's cunning image. Refer to the Cask of the Amontillado section of this Quick Tour for a run-through of this scenario.

CASK–VICTIM PORTAL

Dream Portal to play Cask as the victim, Fortunato.

This Dream Portal takes you into the Cask of the Amontillado dream scenario with you playing the role of the victim (perhaps a deserving one), Fortunato.

This is how you get there from Malevolence:

1. **Go to the Conservatory.**
2. **Open the door. Enter.**
3. **Approach the wine glass on the table.**
4. **Caress the Journeyer's reflection on the wine glass. (Actually, you look into the glass and stick your hand right into the elixir.)**

This automatically transports you to the Cask of the Amontillado dream scenario in which you play the victim, Fortunato. A collage of images from this tale flashes on the screen. Then the rippling waters of a Florence canal appear, reflecting the image of the reveling Fortunato. Refer to the Cask of Amontillado section of this Quick Tour for a run-through of this scenario.

Graphic Novels

You can enter the graphic novels by completing the first three sequences of Malevolence and any three of the dream scenarios, then enter from a dreamstate. (A dreamstate is when your waking world turns blue and you hear whispering voices.) The graphic novel Annabel Lee is available during any dreamstate. Masque of the Red Death is available from any dreamstate, except the first.

Annabel Lee

To activate the Annabel Lee graphic novel while in the dreamstate in Malevolence, follow these simple steps:

1. **Go to the Half Room.**
2. **Open the door. Enter.**
3. **Walk off the edge.**

That's it. The graphic novel plays itself out before your eyes.

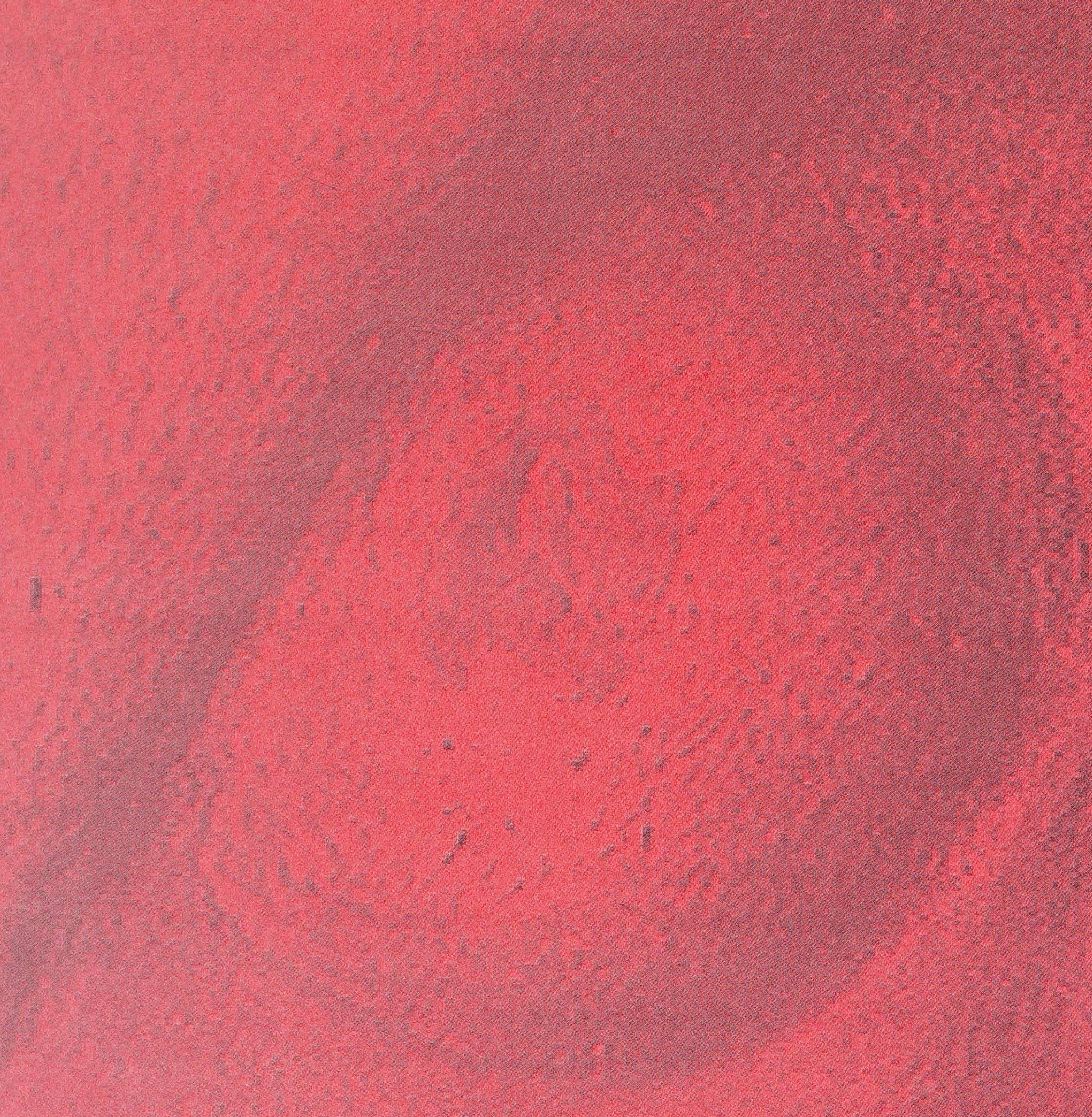
The Masque of the Red Death

Walk this way . . . to activate The Masque of the Red Death graphic novel from the Malevolence dreamstate:

1. **Go the Cellar.**
2. **Go to the Vault.**
3. **Open the door to the Vault. Enter.**
4. **Walk directly into the tapestry at the other end of the room.**

Then, sit back and enjoy the show! (It's a rather long one.)

The Dark Eye



Quick Tour Two

Quick Tour Two

Malevolence

You begin each new game in Malevolence, your "waking" world. After completing the first sequence of Malevolence, you automatically fall into a dreamstate from which you then enter a dream world via the Dream Portal of your choice. Refer to the first part of this Quick Tour for a detailed run-down on these Dream Portals.

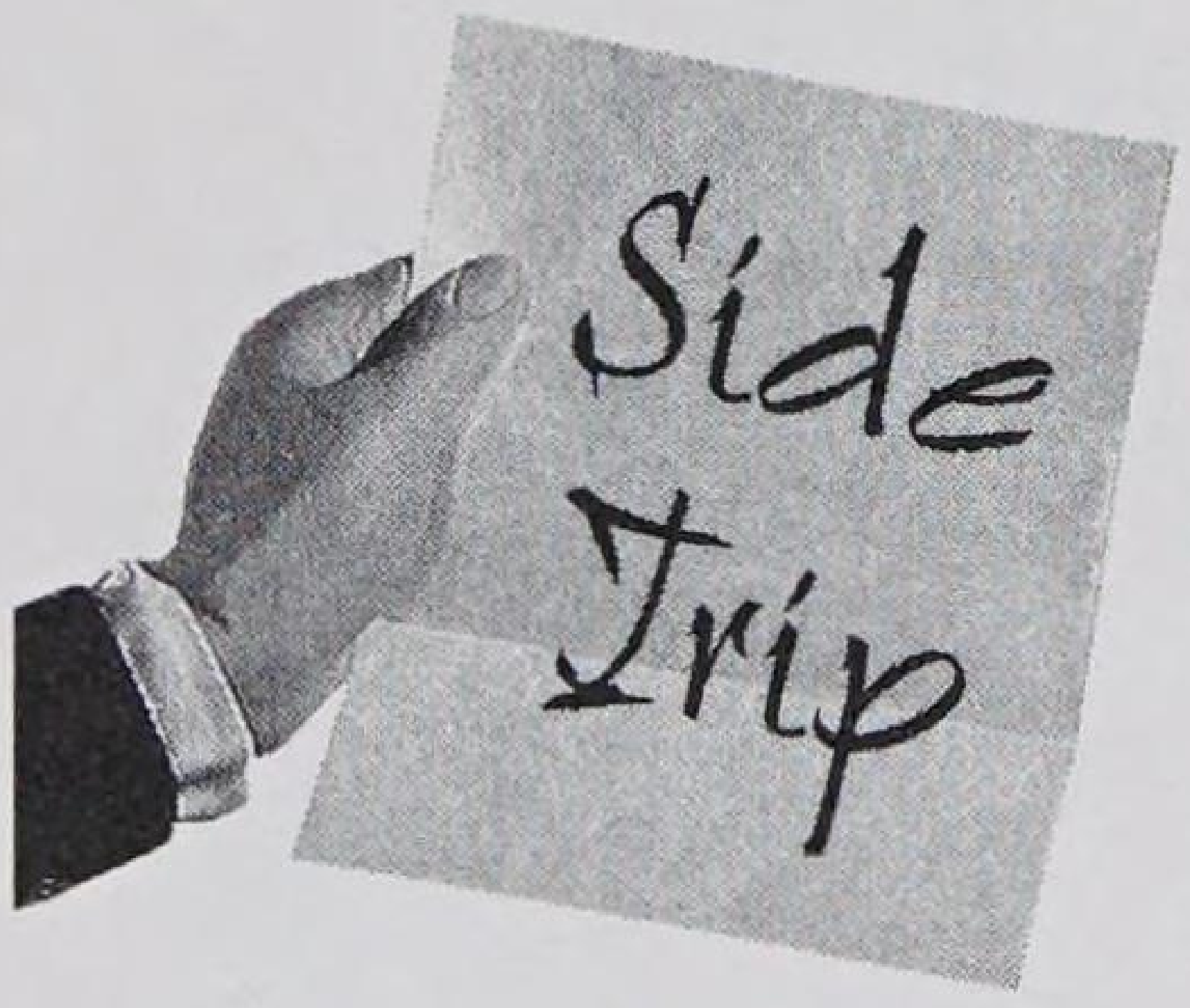
Upon completing a dream scenario, you automatically pop back to Malevolence to begin the next sequential scene–or "sequence"–of Malevolence.

Now, begin!

Malevolence

Sequence One

1. **Click on the reflection pool.**
2. **Knock on the door to the mansion.**
3. **Follow Ambers into the Foyer.**
4. **Enter the Studio and greet Edwin.**
5. **Approach the easel.**
6. **Move to the painting of Berenice on the floor.**
7. **Turn back to the easel.**
8. **Grab the jar of paint thinner. Be careful! Release it to Edwin.**
9. **Turn toward the windows. Are they open? No?**
   Then turn back face to Edwin. Leave the Studio.



This is a good time to acquaint yourself with the mansion. Wander around all four levels of the house. Try to open and enter each room. Approach objects and characters to see whether it prompts an interaction. At least go to the cellar! You need to complete that event before you complete the Conservatory event, which then transports you to a dreamstate.

10. **Go down to the Cellar. Approach Ambers.**

NOTE: You don't have to interact with Ambers at any time during the Malevolence sequences to complete the game. However, interacting with Ambers greatly enhances the darkly macabre feel of the game.

Side Trip

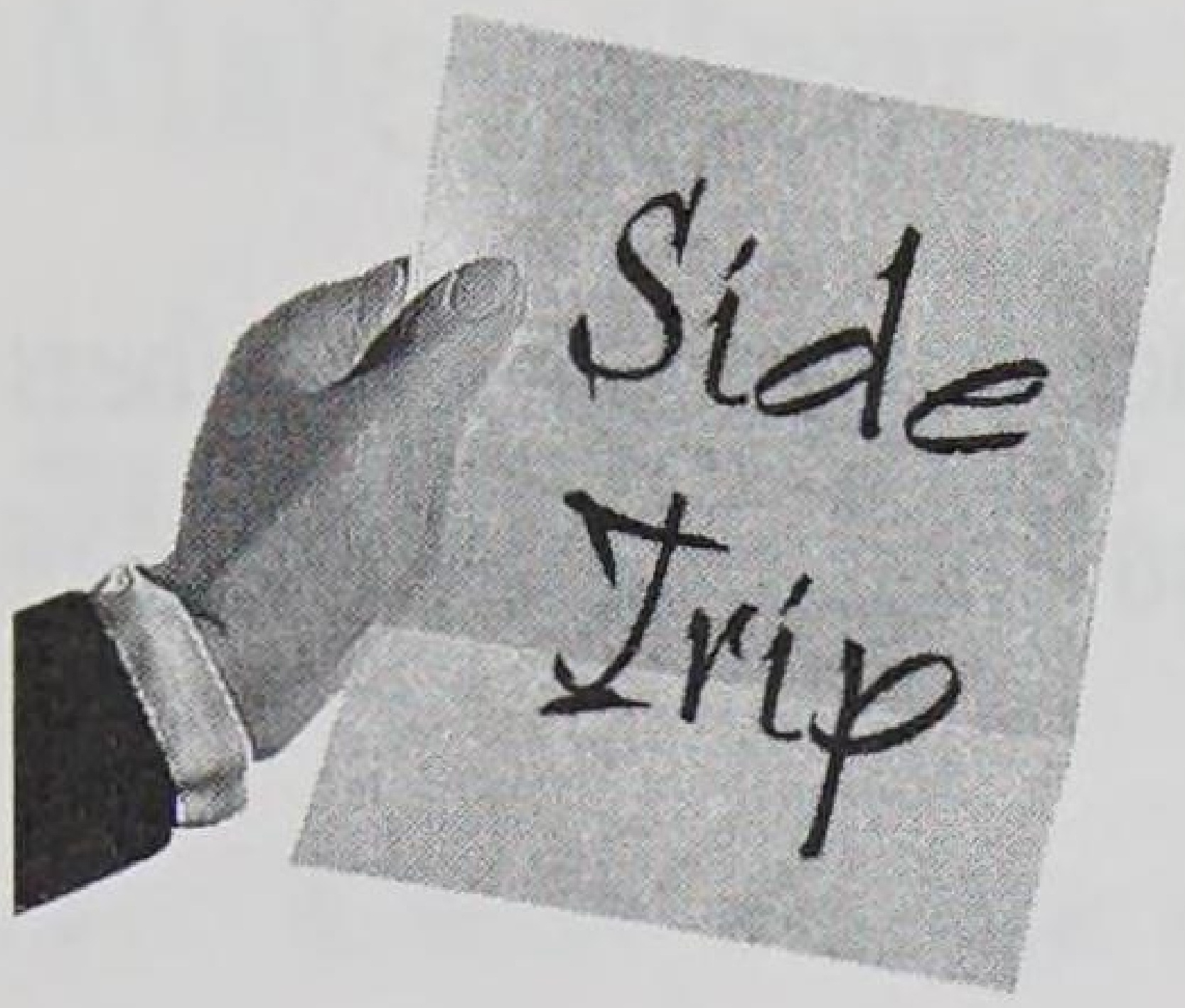
If you return to the Cellar later or simply turn around to face our good man Ambers a second time, he issues you a different warning. This also holds true for some of your later Cellar encounters with Ambers.

11. **Ignore Ambers' warning. Proceed through the passage to the Vault.**
12. **Open the door to the Vault.**
13. **Turn around and high-tail it out of there.**

Side Trip

Originally, the designers intended for a raven to fly out of the Vault–straight at you–presumably to scare you away. Following this, the painting frame in the foyer (which heretofore would have been empty) would now contain a painting of the raven. This painting would have been a third graphic novel portal to Poe's famous poem, "The Raven." Go ahead on in and check it out if you want. But you don't have to go into the dark, dank Vault at this point in the game. You'll enjoy that pleasure soon enough.

14. **Go to the Conservatory and exchange greetings with Henry and Elise.**
15. **Join them in the Conservatory.**
16. **Approach Henry.**
17. **Move to the piano bench.**
18. **Play a little piano concerto to celebrate Henry's announcement.**



Play the song all the way through. To do this, click on the piano keys and hold . . . and hold . . . and hold . . . until after you hear applause. Well done!

19. Return to the settee. Approach Elise.

At this point, you drop into the "blue" dreamstate that enables you to transport to the dream scenario or graphic novel of your choice. Refer to the Dream Portals section of the first section of this Quick Tour to make your selection and activate the scenario.

Remember, if you choose to play a graphic novel immediately after completing a Malevolence sequence, afterward, you must activate and play a dream scenario.

DREAM PORTAL

Sequence Two

Welcome back from your hypnagogic journey! Now continue your waking walk through the mansion of malice, starting here:

20. Go to the Cellar to chat with Ambers.

Side Trip

You can go to the Cellar and let Ambers rib you about your bad dreams at any point in this sequence of Malevolence–before the heated exchange between Henry and Edwin in the Stairwell. We play it here, because it seems logical and gets it out of the way.

21. **Go to the Guest Room.**
22. **Open the door to the Guest Room. Enter.**
23. **Approach Henry. Hear his news.**
24. **Step closer to Henry.**
25. **Follow the fretting Henry to the window.**
26. **Grab the letter Henry drops in his hasty retreat. Read it. Place the letter in your pocket (click on it).**
27. **Go to the Library.**
28. **Approach the desk.**
29. **Pick up the letter from the desk. Read it. Return it to the desk.**
30. **Pick up the Phrenology Map from the desk. Check it out. Return it to the desk.**

Side Trip

Does the Phrenology Map bear a striking resemblance to Ambers, or have we been breathing in too much printer toner?

31. **Go to the Studio.**
32. **Approach the front of the easel. Check out Dear Ed's most recent artistic endeavor. Hmmm, what a coincidence!**

33. Approach the painting on the floor by the windows.

34. Turn to face Edwin. (Cranky old buzzard kind of sneaks up on you, doesn't he?)

35. Follow Edwin out of the Studio and to the Stairwell. Hear out your feuding relations, for God's sake!

Now that you are again in the "blue" dreamstate, it's time to select and activate your next dream scenario. Refer to the Dream Portals section of the first part of the Quick Tour.

DREAM PORTAL

Sequence Three

Welcome back to your living hell. Had enough of your crazy relations yet? No? Well, get on with it then, starting here:

36. Go to the Cellar for a new exchange with Ambers.

37. Go upstairs. Approach Elise's room. Stand outside the room, door closed, and listen to her sobs. (You can knock, but you shouldn't go in.)

38. Go to the Studio.

39. Approach Edwin. Listen–however uneasily–to his tirade. Whatever is he doing with that lantern?

40. Step closer to Edwin. Forewarned is fair warned.

Check out the new painting on the floor, leaning against the wall.

41. **Go to the Guest Room. Open the door. Peek in. No one home. Oh, that Henry. Must be up to no good–or perhaps no good has come to him.**

42. **Go to the Conservatory.**

43. **Knock on the Conservatory door.**

44. **Open the door, when invited.**

45. **Enter the Conservatory. Let Elise cry on your shoulder.**

46. **Approach Elise.**

47. **Take the letter from Elise.**

48. **Move to the piano.**

49. **Accompany the little song bird, Elise. (Click and hold on the piano keys.)**

50. **Turn to–gasp!–Elise.**

> Now that you are again in the "blue" dreamstate, it's time to select and activate your next dream scenario. Refer to the Dream Portals section of the first part of the Quick Tour.

DREAM PORTAL

Sequence Four

Welcome back to the nightmare visit with your bickering relations. Continue the incestuous saga here:

51. **Go to the Guest Room. Enter. What to do, what to do? Tick off Edwin or let Henry suffer? Take a hike and think about it.**
52. **Go to the Cellar. Approach Ambers. Listen to his crack about your dreams. The question of the hour is, how does Ambers know about your dreams? Hmmmm.**
53. **Return to the Guest Room. Enter. Ahhhh. Poor Henry. Can't even count on his sibling. Perhaps a stroll will help clear your mind, if not your conscience.**
54. **Go the Gallery. Check out the new addition to the bloody collection. Does this tell you anything about Uncle Edwin's mental state?**
55. **Return to the Guest Room. Enter. Still mum? Where's your courage, Journeyer?**
56. **Go to the Conservatory. Enter. Now! Before poor Henry totally wigs out.**
57. **Approach the piano.**
58. **Grab Elise's letter from the piano. Fold up the letter (click on it).**
59. **Go the Guest Room, carrying the letter. Enter.**
60. **Give the disparaging epistolary to dear Henry.**

61. Turn to leave, but turn back to listen to Henry's tearful plea for help.

62. At the hrumph! and knock on the door, turn to face Ambers in the doorway–that unabashed messenger of evil.

63. Race to Elise's Bedroom. Open the door. Enter.

64. Approach grieving Edwin.

65. Caress Edwin.

66. Step back from Edwin.

67. Go to the Studio.

68. Approach the easel.

While you're in the Studio, check out the painting on Uncle Ed's easel.

69. Grab the lantern from the table by the easel.

70. Return to Elise's room with lantern.

71. Approach the bedside table, holding the lantern. Place the lantern on the table.

72. Step back and leave your bickering relatives to their grief.

Now that you are again in the "blue" dreamstate, it's time to select and activate your next dream scenario. Refer to the Dream Portals section of the first part of the Quick Tour.

DREAM PORTAL

Sequence Five

Welcome back to the world of living . . . dangerously, that is. Will Henry and Edwin make amends in their hour of mourning, or will their grief undo them? To find out, continue your trek through terror from here:

73. Go to Elise's Bedroom.
74. Grab the lantern from Edwin to light the way.
75. Head for the Cellar with your trio of companions and their dreadful burden.
76. Go to the Vault.
77. Open the door to the Vault. Enter.
78. Approach the shelf to the left as you face the vault door.
79. Place the lantern on the shelf.
80. Leave the Vault.
81. Follow Uncle Edwin out of the Cellar.

Now that you are again in the "blue" dreamstate, it's time
to select and activate your next dream scenario.
Refer to the Dream Portals section of the first part of the Quick Tour.

DREAM PORTAL

Sequence Six

Back for more Malevolence? Has the fine line between your dream world and waking world blurred beyond comprehension? Before you continue your hallucinatory journey, check out the paintings in the Studio and the Gallery. Kind of makes you wonder what dear Uncle Ed's been sniffing. Continue your psychic spiral thusly:

82. **Go to the Half Room.**
83. **Open the door to the Half Room. Enter.**
84. **Approach Henry.**
85. **Caress your delusional brother.**
86. **Turn around and take chase after Henry.**
87. **Head down the Stairwell to face Edwin at the first level landing.**
88. **Follow Edwin to the Library.**
89. **Approach Edwin at the desk.**
90. **Take the letter from Edwin.**
91. **Turn away from Edwin.**
92. **Click on the letter. Read it. Click on the letter to refold it.**
93. **Go up the Stairwell to the second floor landing.**
94. **Approach distressed Henry.**
95. **Race after Henry–again. Go downstairs to the front door.**
96. **Open the front door.**
97. **Go on outside. (Gorgeous, isn't it?) Watch the horror unfold before your bloodshot eyes.**

98. Turn back toward the house . . . to face wrathful, accusatory Edwin. Uh-oh, you're in for it now!

Now that you are again in the "blue" dreamstate, it's time
to select and activate your next dream scenario.
Refer to the Dream Portals section of the first part of the Quick Tour.

DREAM PORTAL

Sequence Seven–Endgame

Where are you now? Go ahead and rub your eyes, but you're not dreaming. Oh, it may look different, but you're back in good old Uncle Edwin's humble abode. Continue through to your climactic end, starting here . . . if you dare:

99. Turn around to face the doorway.
100. Leave this hallowed chamber.
101. Having flashbacks are we? Get out of there.
102. Carnival time? Celebration?
If we were you, we'd beat feet outa' there!
103. Oh, Normie? Are you hiding under the floorboards again?
Go get him . . . before he gets you!
104. Uh-oh. Run into a brick wall, did you? Grab the pickaxe.

**105. Knock that sucker down. C'mon. Whack the brick wall.
Again. Again. Again. You can do it.**

106. Enter the Vault. Oh, look who's here . . . she sure can't see you.

**107. Approach your dear cousin Elise.
"If thine eyes offend thee, pluck them out!"**

Bless your shattered soul! You made it through *The Dark Eye*. Had bad dreams last night, did you?

The Dark Eye

Quick Tour Three

Quick Tour Three

The Tell-Tale Heart

This interactive story, based on the Edgar Allan Poe tale of the same name, transports you to a small walk-up apartment in New York City. The year is 1845. The occupants of this cozy den of fright include a visually challenged elderly man we call *Cy* (for Cecil or Cyclops, as you please) and his neurotic boarder, whom we've fondly christened *Norman*. This is where you land when you select one of the two dream portals–the cleaver (villain) or the fish (victim)–in the Kitchen of the Malevolence Mansion.

The Tell-Tale Heart

Villain: Boarder

If you get chummy with the cleaver in the Malevolence Kitchen, you enter the Tell-Tale Heart dream scenario facing a gilt-framed mirror. This mirror reflects the image of you, the murderer: the Boarder, Norman. Follow this path to the certain demise of your tormentor . . . and your peace of mind.

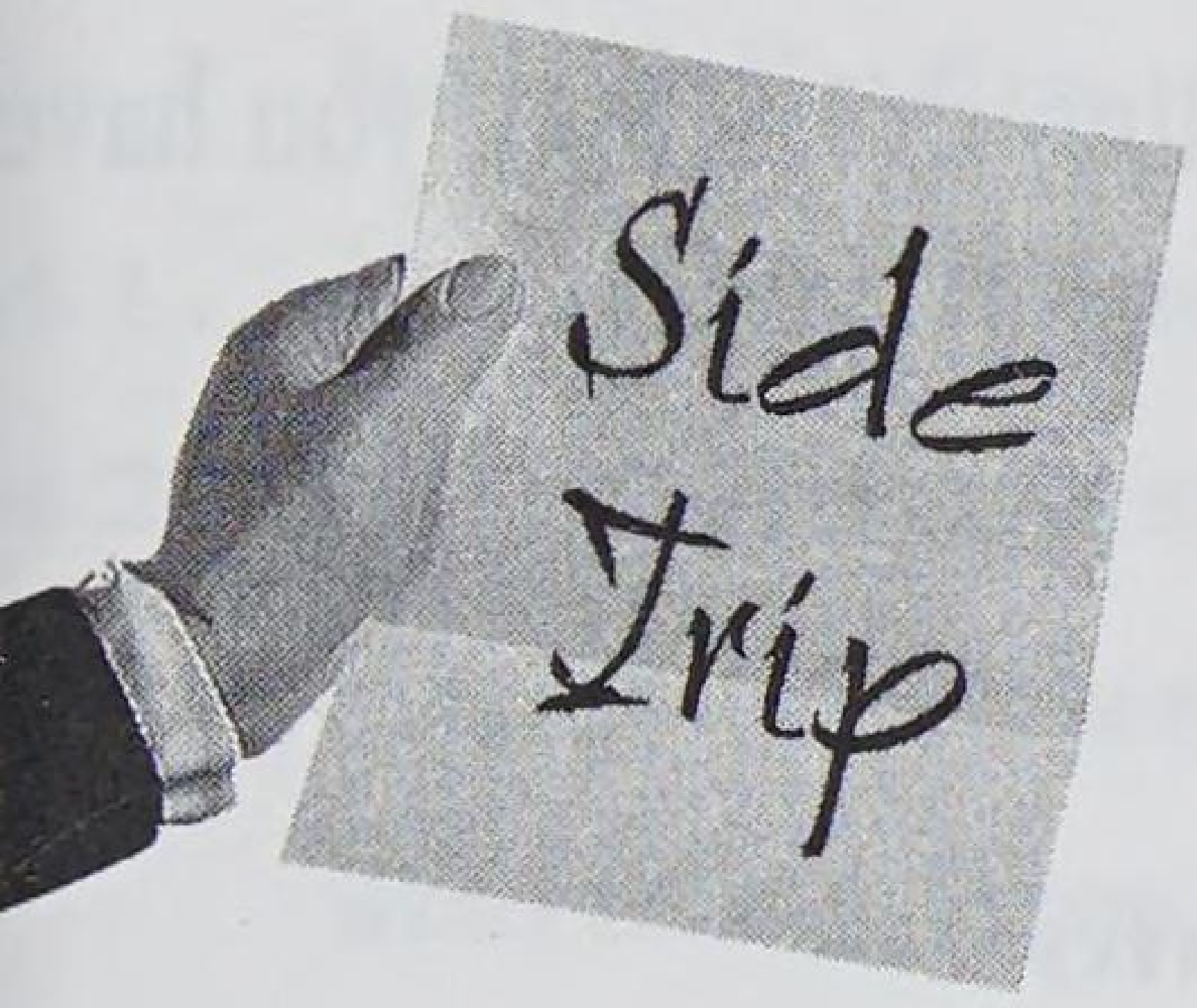
1. **Move to the table in the Main Room. Sit down.**
2. **Grab the tabloid. Read it (or not). Return the tabloid to the table.**
3. **Go to your spartan rented room, Norman's Bedroom.**
4. **Open the door to Norman's Bedroom. Enter.**
5. **Move to the desk. Sit down at the desk.**
6. **Approach the papers on the desk.**
7. **Pick up the pencil.**
8. **Sketch on the paper. Do it again. And again. (Click three times.)**
9. **Put the pencil back on the desk.**
10. **Look up. Open the right-hand drawer of the desk.**
11. **Caress the spectacles in the desk drawer.**
12. **Close the desk drawer.**
13. **Return to the Main Room.**
14. **Sit at the table opposite the Old Man, Cy.**
15. **Caress the old man's 'noggin, after he serves you a rather disgusting-looking bowl of soup.**

Soul Jump

At this point, you get the opportunity to "soul jump," whereby you continue the scenario as the Old Man, rather than as Norman.

To soul jump, click on the old man's cataract-encrusted eye *while Norman's reflection appears in it*. You have less than 10 seconds to make your decision and go for it. Then, continue with Step 20 of the Tell-Tale-Victim scenario below.

To pass up the soul jump–and retain your murderous identity–wait until your reflection fades from Cy's eye. Then, proceed with Step 16 of this scenario below.

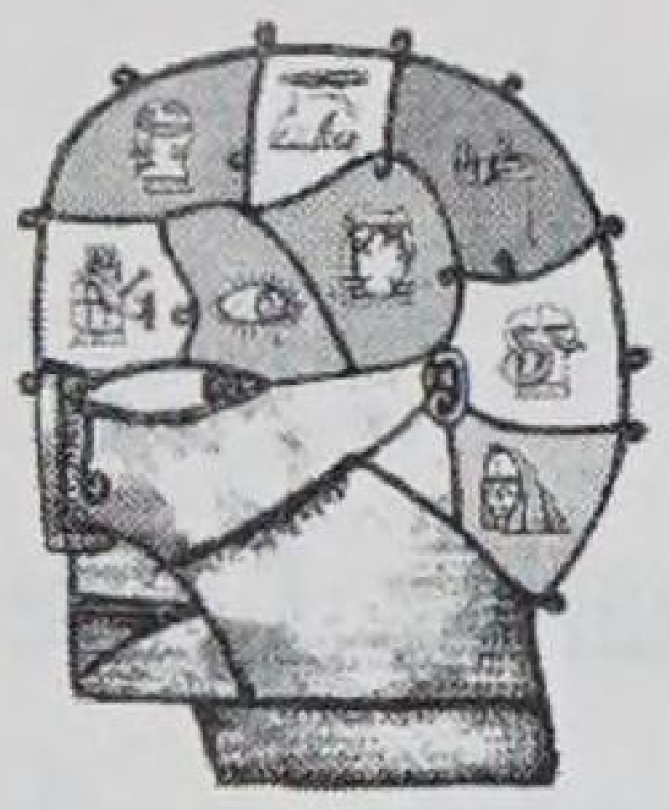


This is the only soul jump opportunity within the Tell-Tale Heart scenarios. Once you swap from Norman's soul to the old man's in this scenario, you cannot jump back to become Norman again. If you begin from Cy's scenario below, you stay Cy for the duration of that scenario.

16. **Step back from Cy. (Click on the close-up of the old geezer.)**
17. **Move to the bay windows.**
18. **Turn to say goodnight to Cy now that the hour has grown late.**
19. **Go to the end of the Hall.**
20. **Turn to the lantern on the wall mantle.**
21. **Close the lantern shutter (click and drag).**
22. **Grab the lantern by its handle, reveling in your wisdom . . . caution . . . foresight.**
23. **Return to the Main Room.**

24. **Move to face the clock.**
25. **Caress the clock to advance the time to midnight.**
26. **Go to the end of the hall. Turn to the lantern.**
27. **Grab the lantern handle. (Do not mess with the latch!)**
28. **While holding the lantern, open the door to Cy's Bedroom.**
29. **Step oh-so-gently into Cy's Bedroom.**
30. **Open the lantern shutter to stealthily look in on the object of your distraction, sleeping peacefully.**

Mind



Be sure to open the lantern shutter all the way, until you hear the Boarder's thought about the old man's eye being "Closed!" If you exit the bedroom without completing this action, you have to repeat the sequence (pick things up from step 17 on page 169).

Trick

31. **Leave Cy's Bedroom with the lantern. (As you step into the hall, the lantern automatically returns to the mantle.)**
32. **Go to the Main Room.**
33. **Move to the bay windows. Watch anxiously for nightfall.**
34. **Turn and watch Cy retreat to his room.**
35. **Go down the Hall.**
36. **Turn to the lantern.**
37. **Grab the lantern. Leave the shutter alone. We said, leave the shutter alone!**

Mind Trick

You can only pick up the lantern if its shutter is completely closed (no light coming from it).

38. **Open the door to Cy's Bedroom while holding the lantern.**
39. **Take one step into Cy's Bedroom, disturbing the old coot. Go back? Nah, proceed with your demented plan.**
40. **Try to open the lantern shutter. So what if Cy sits up—he's blinder than a bat, remember?**
41. **Step closer to groaning Cy.**
42. **Step closer still to the poor old man.**
43. **Open the lantern shutter, shining it into Cy's maimed eye, startling him.**
44. **Move or click your mouse. Repeat, until his heart nearly bursts. (Any mouse movements activate these interactions.)**
45. **Approach Cy to perform your dastardly deed. (Click on him.)**

Side Trip

Shudder! Did your screen turn pitch black after you quieted the old guy's pounding heart? Good. You're progressing nicely. Just continue with step 46.

46. **Move your mouse around the blackened screen. Repeat, ensuring that Cy is stone dead. Repeat, pondering your next move. (Use any three mouse movements.)**
47. **Go to Cy's Bedroom.**
48. **Try to open the door to Cy's Bedroom.**
49. **Return to the Main Room.**
50. **Approach the saw next to the stove. Click on it. Eeeww!**
51. **Go to Cy's Bedroom.**
52. **Open the door to Cy's Bedroom. Enter.**
53. **Approach the desk.**
54. **Grab the book from the desk. Check it out. Place it back on the desk.**
55. **Approach the dresser.**
56. **Open the top-right dresser drawer.**
57. **Grab the coins. Return the coins to the drawer.**
58. **Close the dresser drawer.**
59. **Turn to the loose planks on the floor.**

To find the planks (which creak when you walk over them), turn to face the door while standing by the dresser. Then, look down.

60. **Remove one plank. Remove a second plank.**
61. **Turn to the bloody bags on the floor. Place the bloody bags, one by one, beneath the flooring.**
62. **Replace the planks, one by one. Look up.**

63. Heads up! Who could be knocking at the door? Don't just kneel there! Go to the Main Room and find out.
64. Open the front door.
65. Turn right to invite the officers in.
66. Step forward.
67. Turn to answer the Sergeant's question.
68. Wait and watch calmly as the police spread out to look about the house.
69. Lead the Sarge to Norman's Bedroom.
70. Try to open the door to Norman's Bedroom.
71. Lead the Sarge to Cy's Bedroom.
72. Open the door to Cy's Bedroom. Enter.
73. Move to the chair, inviting the lawmen to sit for a spell.
74. You will automatically sit and turn to face the doorway.
75. Caress the policeman standing smugly in the doorway of Cy's Bedroom.
76. Turn to the policeman standing by the dresser and tell him of the treasures therein.

If you wait until the cop stops fumbling in the dresser drawer, you'll be waiting a long time. He keeps doing this until you turn away.

77. Turn to the Sergeant and encourage him to stay.
78. Look from one policeman to another (back to forth), as your frenzy grows. Repeat as long as you're able; you'll end up staring at a close-up of the villainous Sarge.
79. Click on the Sarge.

Heh-heh . . . your conscience got to you, did it, Norman?

See "Beam Me Back, Uncle Eddie," page 177.

Victim: Old Man

If you caress your reflection in the fish's eye in the Malevolence Kitchen, you enter Tell-Tale facing a gilt-framed mirror. This mirror reflects you, the victim: sweet, old unsuspecting Cy.

1. **Go to the bay window in the Main Room. Watch the passerby.**
2. **Move to the table. Sit down.**
3. **Grab the newspaper. Give it the once-over. Place it back on the table.**
4. **Approach the clock.**
5. **Caress the clock.**
6. **Go to Cy's Bedroom at the far end of the hall.**
7. **Open the door. Enter.**
8. **Approach the dresser.**
9. **Open the top-right dresser drawer.**
10. **Grab the coins.**
11. **Caress the coins. Return them to the drawer.**
12. **Grab the concert program from the drawer. Reminisce. Return the program to the drawer.**
13. **Grab the wedding ring from the drawer. Reminisce. Return the ring to the drawer.**

14. **Close the dresser drawer.**
15. **Move to the desk.**
16. **Grab the book from the desk. Peruse it. Return the book to the desk.**
17. **Move to the bookcase.**
18. **Grab the photo from the bookcase. Reminisce. Return the photo to the bookcase.**
19. **Leave Cy's Bedroom. Watch the Boarder (Norman) enter the house.**
20. **Go to the Main Room.**
21. **Move to the counter.**
22. **Pick up a bowl.**
23. **Carry the empty bowl to the table.**
24. **Grab the spoon. Forget something?**
25. **Pick up the bowl.**
26. **Carry the bowl to the stove.**
27. **Ladle some soup into the bowl.**
28. **Carry the bowl of soup to the table.**
29. **Now you can eat. Pick up the spoon. Slurp away!**

You can slurp the soup as many times as you can stomach. With every click on the soup, you get a spoonful. If you click around the room enough, kindly Cy also hums. Little does he know what's in store.

30. **Move to face the clock.**
31. **Go down the hall to Cy's Bedroom for a good night's sleep. . . .**
32. **Open the door to Cy's Bedroom. Enter.**
33. **Move to the window. What a view, eh?**

34. Move to the desk.

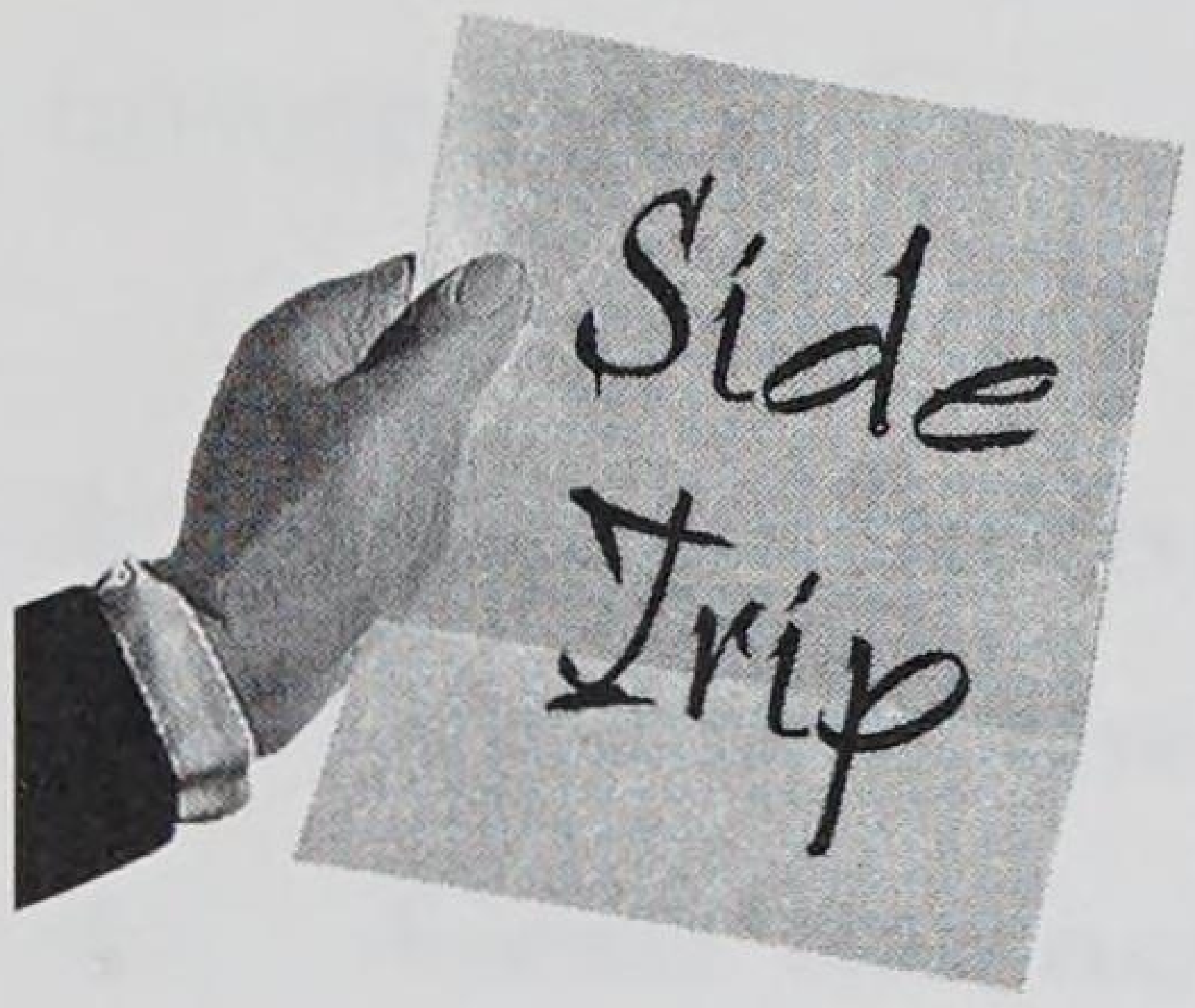
35. Pinch out the candle.

36. Approach the bed and hop in. Sweet dreams!

37. While dreaming, caress the photo of the Old Man's wife as it floats by.

38. While dreaming, caress Norman's nightmarish image floating by.

39. While dreaming, caress the hallway image.



Try to caress each floating nightmare icon. It is not required that you since an internal timer will eventually run out and move things along. But it's fun to experience all three.

40. Rest your myopic eye on the murky shape hovering at the foot of the bed.

41. Caress the ghostly form hovering near the foot of the bed.

42. Put your hand out to protect yourself from the blinding light by clicking on the intruder.

Guess you didn't see that one coming. . . .

MALEVOLENCE PORTAL

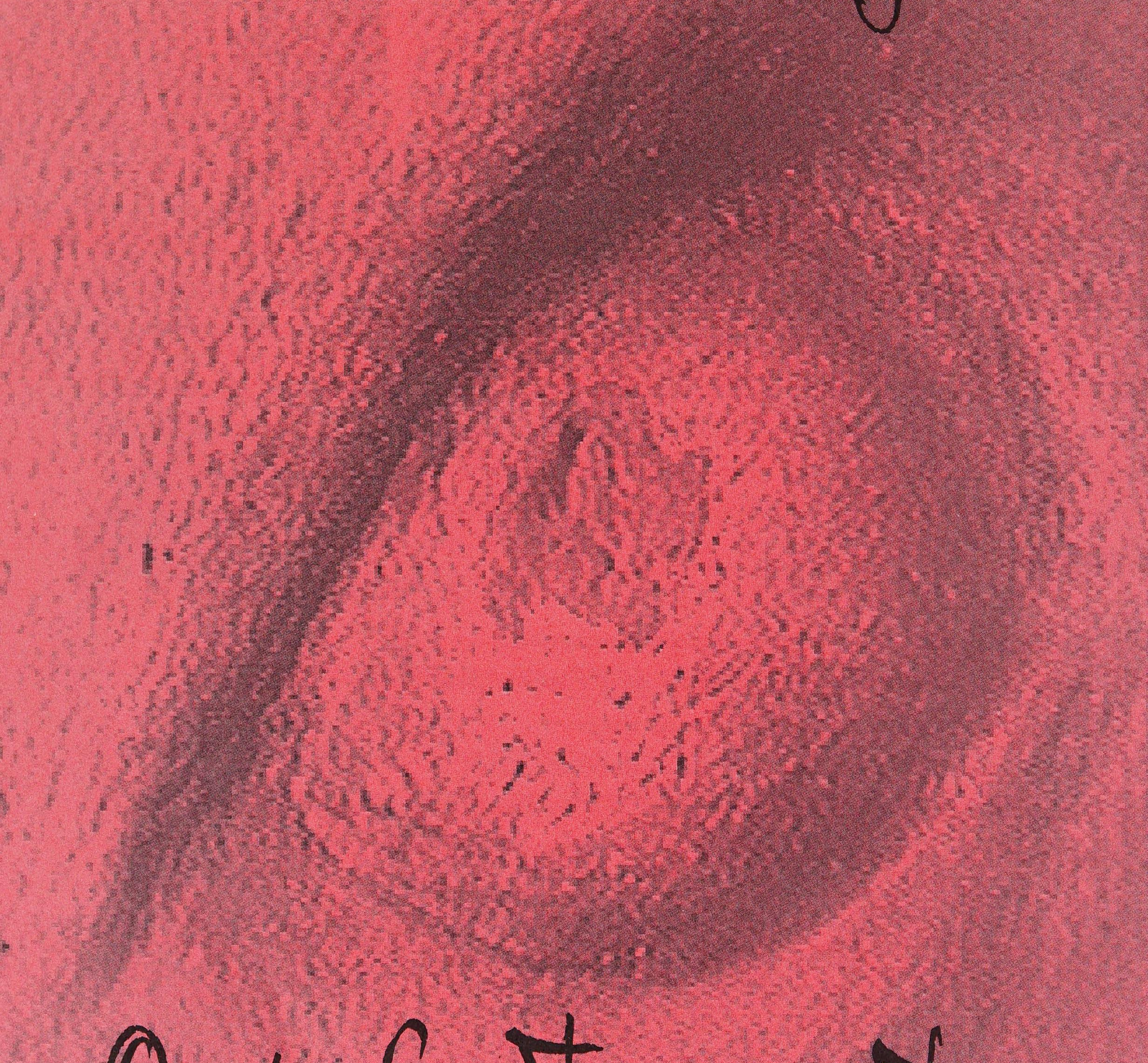
Beam Me Back, Uncle Eddie

At the conclusion of either of the Tell-Tale Heart scenarios, you are automatically transported back to the waking world and into the Kitchen of Edwin's house of horrors. From here, you can tackle the next sordid chapter of the Malevolence scenario.

Actually, at this point–as when you complete any dream world scenario–you can do one of three things:

- **Complete the next Malevolence sequence.**
- **Return to the Phrenology Map and enter a previously completed dream scenario from there.**
- **Return to the Options screen and select Quit.**
  Then, go take a nap or a spot of tea to soothe your rattled nerves–to ready yourself for your journey into The Dark Eye.

The Dark Eye



Quick Tour Four

Quick Tour Four

Berenice

This interactive tome, based on the Edgar Allan Poe short story of the same name, transports you to the august country manor of a wealthy family with a distinguished lineage. This is the lifelong home of the tormented Egaeus and his cousin, the once-beautiful and sprite Berenice, who grew in opposing directions toward a gnawingly brutal climax.

You reach this dream destination after selecting one of two Dream Portals–the letter opener (villain) or the bird cage (victim)–in the Library of the Malevolence Mansion.

Quick Tour Four

Berenice

Villain: Egaeus

If your obsession drives you to caress the letter opener in the Malevolence Library, you enter the Berenice scenario in the cloistered Study of a country manor. You are seated at the desk, staring at your reflection in an ornate letter opener belonging to the room's sole occupant, Egaeus.

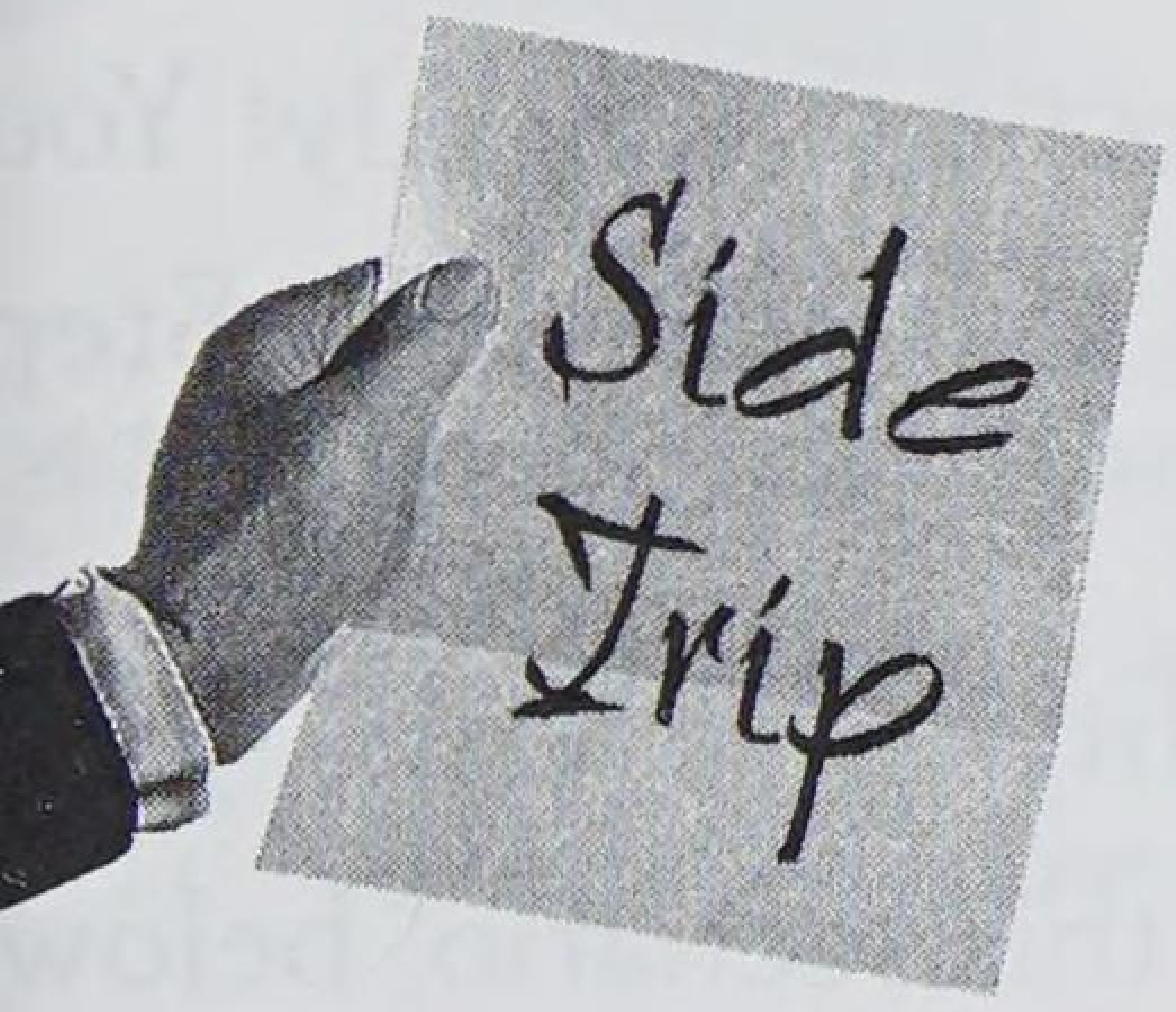
Explore the wavering line between family honor and self-preservation, between love and hate . . . to the ultimate undoing of family ties, starting here:

1. **Approach the papers on the desk.**
2. **Pick up the pen.**
3. **Write the first part of the letter.**
4. **Move to the overstuffed chair by the fireplace.**
5. **Caress the chair.**

In order to caress the chair (and trigger the interaction), you must approach it from a certain angle. The easiest way we found to do this from your "start" position behind the desk is to move to the center of the room so you face the window opposite the desk, then left-click two times or right-click four times.

6. **Move to the portrait of Egaeus' mother behind the desk.**
7. **Caress Mommy dearest. Repeat.**
8. **Approach the desk.**
9. **Open the desk drawer.**

10. **Caress the locket inside the desk drawer.**
11. **Close the desk drawer.**
12. **Move to the portrait of Egaeus' Grandfather above the fireplace.**
13. **Caress Grandpa's portrait, eliciting a chilling reminder of your duties.**
14. **Approach the burning embers below Grandfather's portrait.**
15. **Warm your hands (caress) over the burning embers.**
16. **Move to the portrait of Berenice to the right of the fireplace.**
17. **Approach the book on the mantle under Berenice's portrait.**
18. **Pick up (grab) the book. Listen to the Poynton family legacy of obsession. Replace the book. Repeat. Hear your heritage of compulsive tendencies echo in your mind.**
19. **Move to the trio of landscape paintings by the window.**
20. **Caress the pasture painting.**
21. **Approach the window next to the landscape paintings.**
22. **Caress the window.**
23. **Move to the overstuffed chair.**



Remember, you must reach a specific view of the chair. If you can't caress the chair after approaching it from one angle, try another approach/view. At this point it's not required for you to caress the chair yet again in order to finish writing the letter–as long as six interactions occur, the chair need not be caressed here.

24. **Caress the fan on the table next to the chair.**
25. **Move to the window next to the desk.**
26. **Bend down to view the sunlight streaming onto the carpet. (Turn right, then click-down.)**
27. **Caress the shadowy sunspot on the carpet.**

28. Move to stand behind the desk.
29. Sit down at the desk.
30. Approach the letter on the desk.
31. Pick up the pen.
32. Complete the letter.
33. Sit back in the chair (right-click).
34. Look up to face the door at the sound of knocking. Watch and listen to the object of your obsessions.
35. Caress the three images (all of them, if you can) hovering over Berenice.

Soul Jump

At this point, you get the opportunity to "soul jump," enabling you to continue the scenario as the pitiful Berenice, rather than the contemptuous Egaeus.

To soul jump, click on Berenice the *instant* her lusterless eyes begin to twinkle. Then, click again on the close-up of her sickly eyes glittering Egaeus' reflection. Quickly! You have less than 10 seconds to make your decision and go for it. Then, continue with Step 28 of the Berenice-Victim scenario, below.

To pass up the soul jump—and retain your murderous identity—wait until your reflection fades from Berenice's eyes. Then, proceed with Step 36 of this scenario, below

36. Snap out of it! (Click on Berenice.) Listen in horror as you do the honorable thing. Time passes . . . slowly, darkly.
37. Pace the room, visiting your relatives' portraits, as your mind races: Mother and Granddaddy.

38. Approach the landscape paintings.

39. Caress the landscape paintings.

40. Approach the window next to the landscape paintings.

41. Caress the window next to the landscape paintings.

42. Move to the overstuffed chair by the fireplace. (Getting right angle on this chair is hauntingly difficult.)

43. Caress the fan on the table next to the chair.

44. Move the landscape paintings again to see a hallucination.

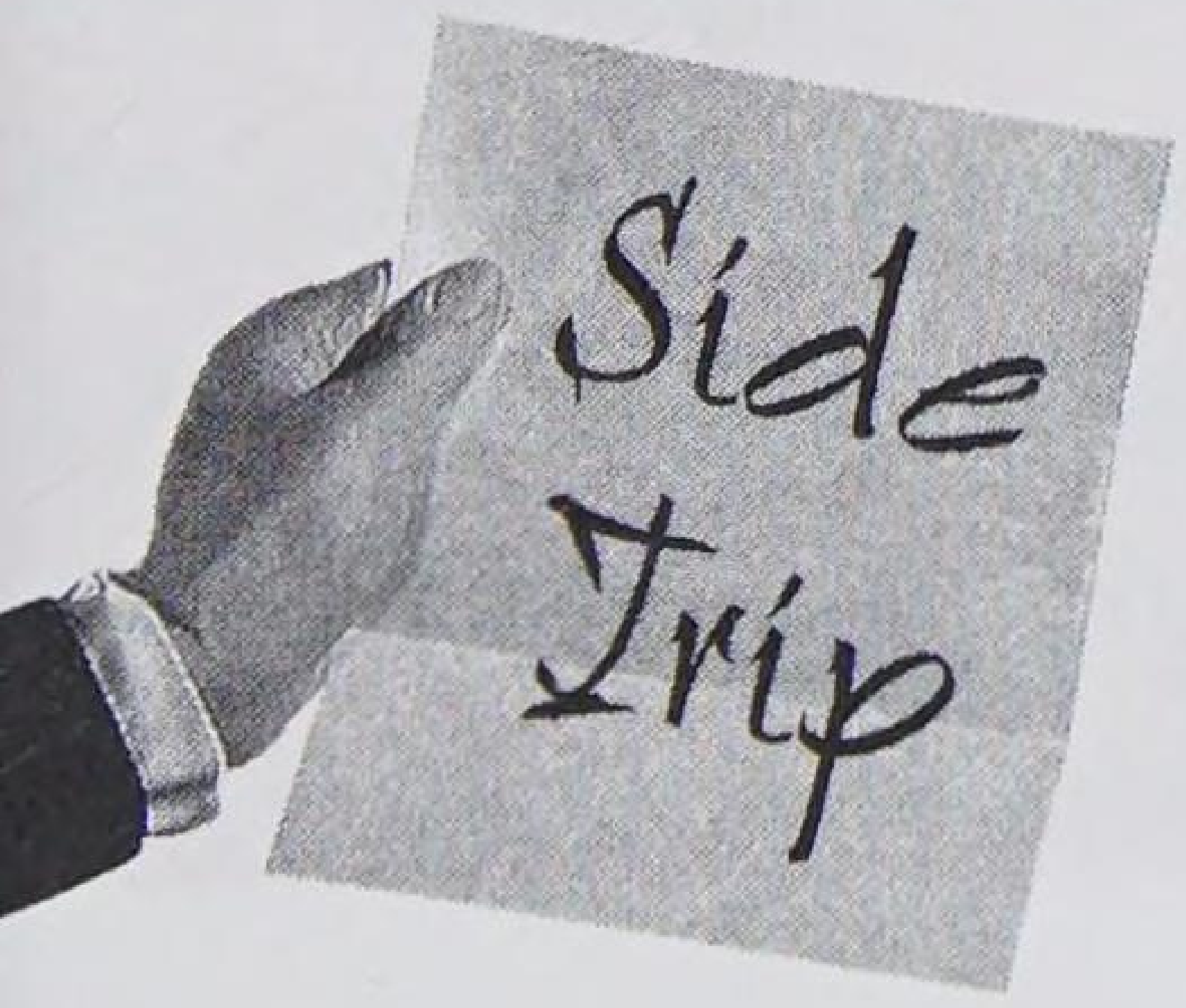
45. Move the center of the room, facing the portraits for another vision.

46. Move to the window by the desk. Watch in despair as the day of your dread approaches.

47. Approach the overstuffed chair.

The ghost appears in the chair only when you approach the chair from a certain angle and only after you've completed certain interactions and a certain number of moves. Which ones? We'll never tell. To be safe, move around a lot and complete all of the interactions. Wouldn't hurt to repeat a few of them, either.

48. Pace the room, going from portrait to portrait. Waltz from one window to the other. Approach the landscape paintings. Stand in front of the fireplace. Approach the chair from every conceivable angle. Move that mouse, repeatedly!



The objective of Step 48 , above, is to perform a certain number (a lot) of mouse interactions (clicks) and to reach a specific node in the room to trigger the knock on the door.

49. **Turn toward the door when you hear knocking. Allow Berenice to enter and speak her peace–if, that is, you can focus on something other than her sickly grin . . . or is that a grimace?**

Soul Jump

Here comes your second opportunity to swap souls if you didn't take the first one. If you jump on it, you finish the scenario as Berenice.

To soul jump, click on Berenice's twinkling eyes. Remember, you must move quickly Then continue with Step 51 of the Berenice-Victim scenario, below.

To pass up the soul jump, wait until the twinkling stops. Then proceed with Step 50 of this scenario, below.

50. **Caress Berenice's smile.**
51. **Run to Mommy!–or rather, her portrait.**
52. **Caress Mom's dour portrait. Now, isn't that better?**
53. **Turn to face the desk.**
54. **Approach the papers on the desk. Examine them.**
55. **Move to Grandfather's portrait. My, what ghastly pearly whites you have, Grandpa!**

Sanity Saver

Listen carefully to the sound of your own obsessed mind. Make another bunch of moves, (56-60) and watch as the visual hallucinations begin!

56. **See anything odd as you're wandering around?**
57. **Move to the marble bust of Plato.**
58. **Caress Medusa's head on the Perseus tapestry.**
59. **Move to the overstuffed chair. (Remember, get the angle just right.)**
60. **Caress the fan on the table. Did you hear what we heard?**
61. **Move to the window by the desk.**
62. **Pace the room again . . . keep walking, buster, until you hear cries outside the door.**

Again, you must complete certain actions, as well as a number of mouse clicks, and approach the window by the desk before you hear cries outside the door. The cries are faint, especially if you keep the sound on your computer at to a reasonable level. If you've clicked around ten times or so without noticing the sound of a woman's cries, go check the door handle to see if you can open it. If you can, do. If you can't, click around a few more times, go back to the window, then try the door knob again.

61. **Move to the door of the Study.**
62. **Open the door. Listen to the handservant's woes. Click on the handservant. No more . . . but wait, screams in the darkness!**
63. **Approach the open book on the desk. Read the dark quote. Return the book to the desk.**
64. **Try to grab the box on the desk. Repeat.**
65. **Look up. Go back to your book.**
66. **Look up at the sound of knocking at the door.**
67. **Listen to the handservant's disturbed ravings. Alive!**
68. **Turn your bloodied hand over and over.**
69. **Turn toward the fireplace to see "What's this?"**

70. Approach the muddy shovel.

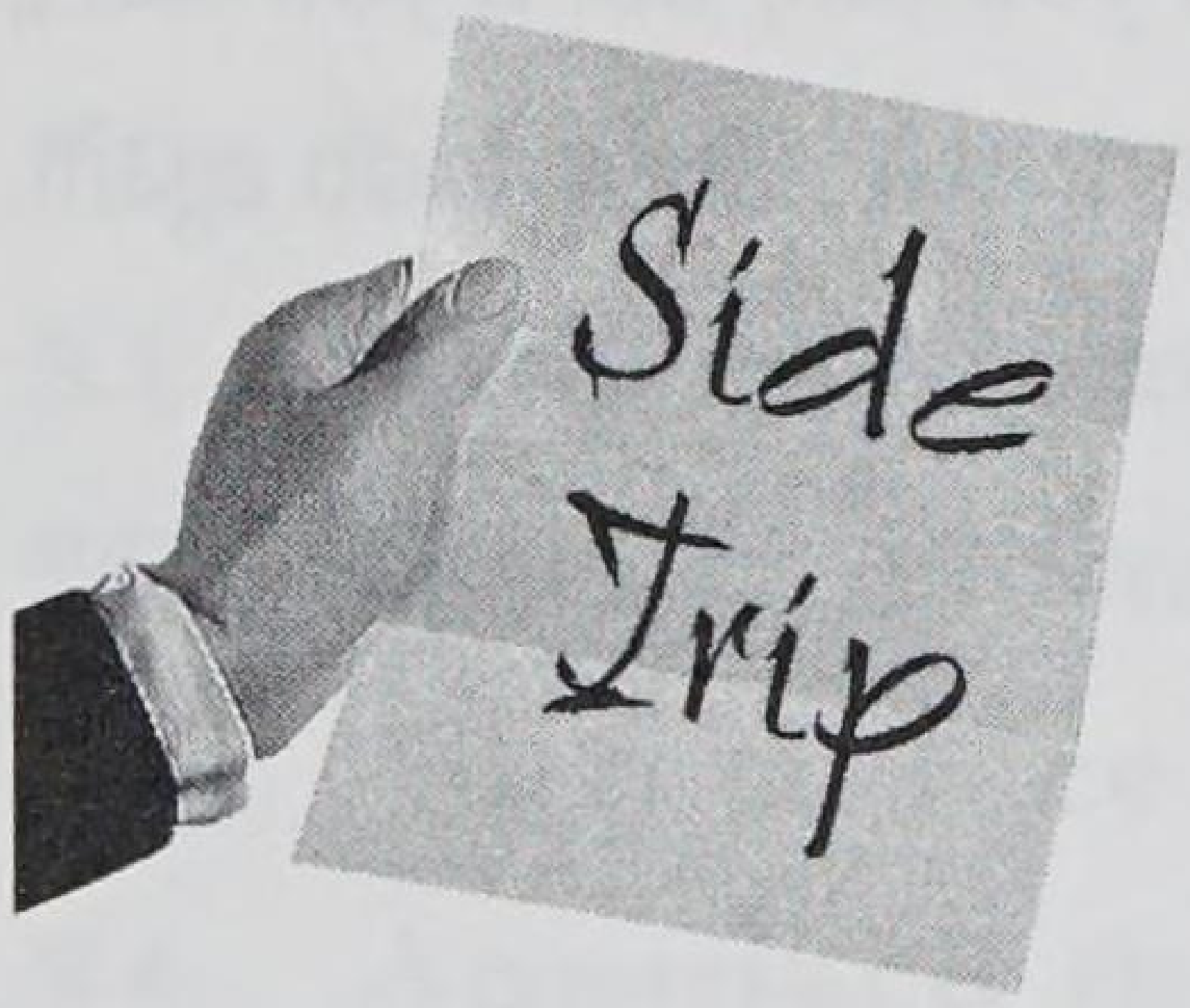
71. Turn back to the desk.

72. Grab the box on the desk.

Kudos! You performed admirably in this most teeth-chattering experience.

See "Beam Me Back, Uncle Eddie," page 191.

MALEVOLENCE PORTAL



For a really twisted trip, start from either the Egaeus (villain) or Berenice (victim) scenario–take the first soul jump opportunity, swapping souls and continuing play as the other main character. Then, take the second soul jump and resume the identity of either the antagonist (Egaeus) or the protagonist (Berenice). Jumping back and forth between souls is grand, convoluted fun!

Victim: Berenice

If the chirping little birdie compels you to caress his cage in the Malevolence Library, you enter this dream scenario in the sunlit bedroom of the sickly Berenice. You enter facing your reflection in the vanity mirror, unless you are re-entering the game after having completed a portion of it. If you didn't land in front of the vanity mirror, move your sad sack over there now and take a look at your poor, poor pitiful self. Oooo, harsh!

Why so sad? Smile! And take this route to your lovelorn destiny:

1. **Move to the desk.**
2. **Approach the book on the desk.**
3. **Pick up (grab) the book. Read the romantic ditty (if you want).**
4. **Caress the red pressed flower on the book.**
5. **Return the book to the desk.**
6. **Grab the medicine bottle from the desk. Chug it!**
7. **Pick up the framed lithograph from the desk. Strange-looking parents you've got there. Place the photo back on the desk.**
8. **Approach the letter on the desk. Read it.**
9. **Pick up the pen.**
10. **Sign the letter.**
11. **Approach the hope chest.**
12. **Open the hope chest.**
13. **Caress the wedding dress in the hope chest.**
14. **Close the hope chest.**
15. **Move to the vanity.**
16. **Approach the vanity drawer (down-click).**
17. **Open the vanity drawer.**
18. **Grab the crumpled letter. Read it–and weep. Return it to the drawer.**
19. **Close the vanity drawer.**
20. **Move to the bed.**
21. **Sit on the bed.**
22. **Turn to face the knock on the door.**
    Listen to Katherine's words of concern.
23. **Approach the needlepoint on the bed.**
24. **Pick up the needlepoint.**

25. Grab the needle.

26. Stitch it, stitch it good. (Click the "needle" on the needlepoint once, then again.)

27. Place the needlepoint back on the bed.

28. Get up. Move to the door. Open the door.

29. Go downstairs to Egaeus' Study (to the right of the stairway).

30. Knock on the door of the Study. Yes, open the door.

31. Approach the oh-so-preoccupied Egaeus.

32. Caress the books on the shelf behind Egaeus.

33. Caress the portrait of your aunt (and your beloved's mother).

34. Caress the ever distant Egaeus.

Soul Jump

At this point, you get the opportunity to swap places with Egaeus and continue the scenario in his head (now *that's* a scary proposition).

To soul jump, click on Egaeus' remote eyes *while they twinkle* with Berenice's reflection. You have less than ten seconds to make your decision and go for it. Then, continue with Step 34 of the Berenice-Villain scenario, above.

To pass up the soul jump–and retain your sad sack identity–wait until your reflection fades from Egaeus' eye. Proceed with Step 35 of this scenario, below.

35. Click on Egaeus after his proposition.

36. Hello? How'd you get back here? No matter. Move to the vanity. Watch the blush fade from your bloom.

37. Move to the fireplace.

38. Turn to the knock on the door. Listen to your handservant's sunny rambles.

39. **Return to the vanity.**
40. **Approach the hope chest. Open it. Caress the wedding gown inside. Close the hope chest.**
41. **Move to the bed.**
42. **Approach the needlepoint. Pick it up.**
43. **Grab the needle. Stitch the needlepoint; once more with feeling. Put down your handiwork.**
44. **Move to the desk. (You must stand directly in front of it.)**
45. **Turn (right-click) toward the bird cage.**
46. **Caress the bird cage.**
47. **Approach the desk.**
48. **Sit at the desk.**
49. **Approach the letter on the desk. Do read it. Happy, happy, joy, joy!**
50. **Pick up the pen. Sign the letter.**
51. **Go to the Study for another intoxicating visit with your betrothed.**
52. **Open the door to the Study. (No need to knock this time. In fact, you can't knock.)**
53. **Approach Egaeus. Oh, he's all right, a little self-absorbed, maybe . . .**
54. **Move a little closer now. Disturb him? Like he's not already disturbed.**

Soul Jump

If you didn't jump on it the first time, you now get another opportunity to swap places with Egaeus for the rest of the scenario.

To soul jump, click on Egaeus' eyes *while they twinkle* with Berenice's reflection. Remember, you get less than ten seconds to go for it. Then, continue with Step 47 of the Berenice-Villain scenario, above.

To pass up the soul jump–and retain your sad sack identity–wait until your reflection fades from Egaeus' eye. Proceed with Step 55 of this scenario, below.

55. **Step back from Egaeus (left- or right-click).**
56. **Stumble out of the Study.**
57. **Go upstairs–woozily, slowly.**
58. **Lurch your way to Berenice's Bedroom.**
59. **Open the door of Berenice's Bedroom. Enter the room.**
60. **Move to the desk.**
61. **Approach the medicine bottle.**
62. **Make a grab for the medicine bottle. Uh-oh . . . brain fade.**
63. **Dear God! Pound on the coffin lid. Pound for your life! Oh thank God . . . Oh, no . . . No!**

Feeling a bit faint of heart, are you?

Beam Me Back, Uncle Eddie

At the conclusion of either of the Berenice scenarios, you are automatically transported back to the waking world and into the Library of Edwin's house of horrors. From here, you can tackle the next sordid chapter of the Malevolence scenario.

Actually, at this point–as when you complete any dream world scenario–you can do one of three things:

- **Complete the next Malevolence sequence.**
- **Return to the Phrenology Map and enter a previously completed dream scenario from there.**
- **Return to the Options screen and select Quit.**
  Then, go take a nap or a spot of tea to soothe your rattled nerves–to ready yourself for your journey into The Dark Eye.

The Dark Eye

Quick Tour Five

Quick Tour Five

The Cask of Amontillado

This interactive tome, based on the Edgar Allan Poe tale of the same name, transports you to a street carnival in Florence, Italy, circa 1803. From here, you travel to the villa of the contemptuous Montresor, who orchestrates the hideously slow demise of his greedy adversary, Fortunato.

This is your dream destination when you select one of two dream portals–the wine bottle (villain) or the wine glass (victim)–in the Conservatory of the Malevolence Mansion.

Quick Tour Five

The Cask of Amontillado

Villain: Montresor

If you can't keep your hands off the wine bottle in the Malevolence Conservatory, you enter Cask of Amontillado facing the shop window of a jewelry merchant. Though you quickly attempt to conceal your identity, the glass window reflects your image: Montresor . . . you masked murderer, you.

Take this route to your bittersweet revenge:

1. **Caress the diamond necklace in the shop window.**
2. **Approach the beggar.**
3. **Approach the servant gesturing at the street corner. Click on him.**
4. **Turn your back on the servant.**
5. **Approach the guardrail to stand facing the bridge in the distance, standing to the left of the two hooded revelers.**
6. **Caress the jester (Fortunato) on the bridge.**
7. **Move into the intersection of the bridge and the street.**
8. **After the interaction with Fortunato's servant, turn around to face the direction from which you came (down the street from the reveling crowd).**
9. **Move forward a step.**
10. **Turn right to view the bridge from afar, this time standing to the right of two hooded revelers.**
11. **Caress Fortunato on the bridge in the distance.**

Soul Jump

Immediately after you caress Fortunato in step 11, your first soul jumping opportunity presents itself. If you go for it, you continue the scenario as Fortunato from this point forward–or until your next (and last) soul jump opportunity later in the scenario.

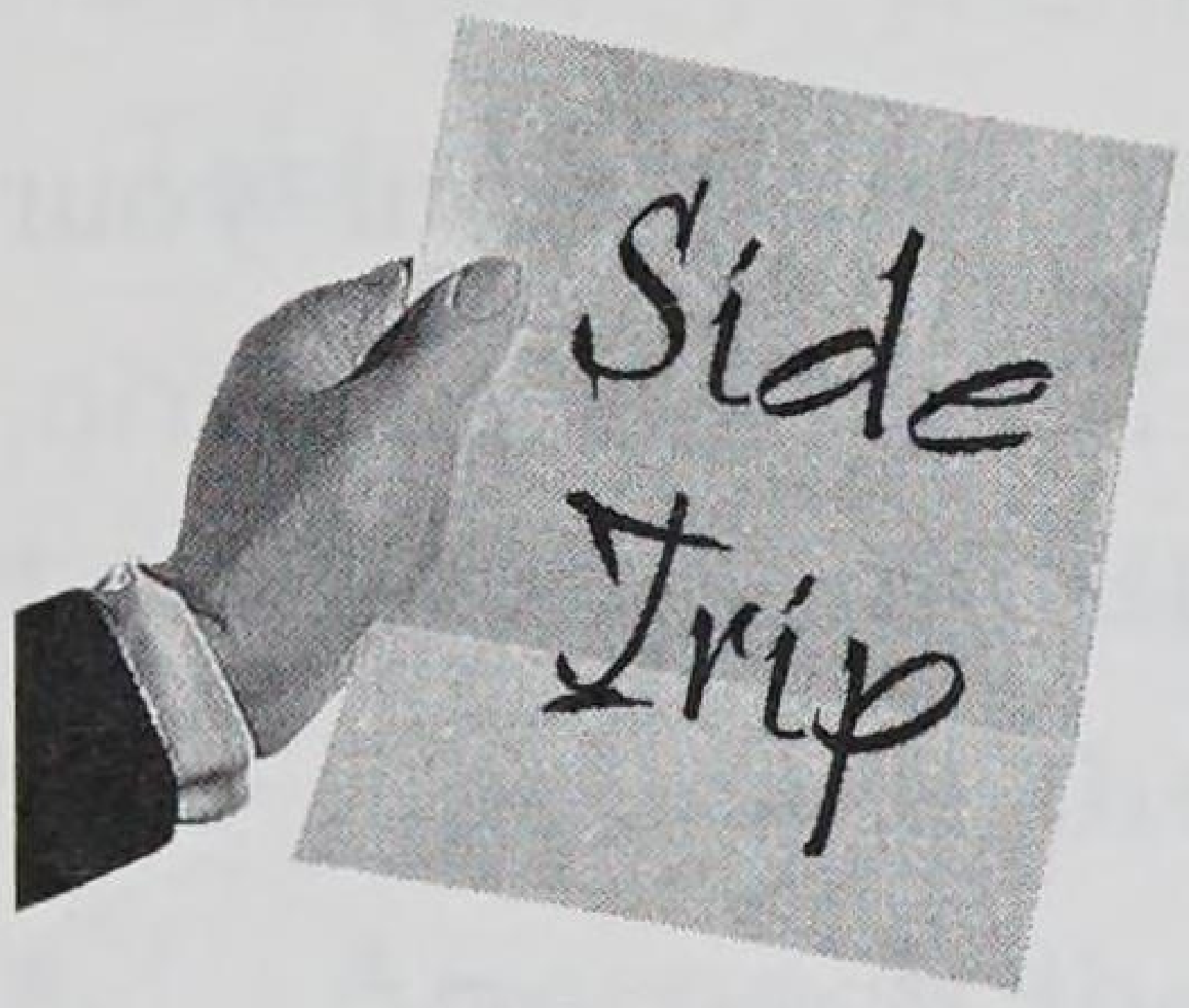
To **soul jump**, click on Fortunato's twinkling eyes–*while Montresor's reflection appears in them*. You have between five and ten seconds to click. Then, continue with Step 1 of the Cask of Amontillado-Victim scenario, below.

To **pass up the soul jump**–and retain your murderous identity–wait until your reflection fades from Fortunato's eye. Then, proceed with Step 12 of this scenario, below.

12. **Click on Fortunato's face.**
13. **Move onto the bridge.**
14. **Approach Fortunato.**
15. **Greet Fortunato by clicking on him. Click on him again to continue the conversation.**
16. **Turn to Luchesi.**
17. **Click on Luchesi.**
18. **Turn back to Fortunato.**
19. **Approach tipsy Desdemona, who stands in the middle of the bridge to the far right.**
20. **Approach the moon-faced Sycophant on the other side of the bridge.**
21. **Approach giggling Emilia in the center of the bridge.**
22. **Move toward the shore, leaving the bridge.**
23. **Let's go! Turn back to face Fortunato.**
24. **Go with (click on) Fortunato.**

Quick Tour Five

25. **Approach Montresor's villa.**
26. **Open the latch of the villa's gate.**
27. **Enter the grounds of the villa.**
28. **Approach the entrance to the catacombs.**
29. **Open the door to the catacombs.**
30. **Step into the antechamber of the catacombs.**
31. **Grab the torch.**



If you step too far into the catacombs and pass by the torch, Fortunato soon complains of the dark. Go back and get the torch. You need it.

32. **Enter the catacombs.**
33. **Go down the steps.**
34. **Stop to poke at the moth caught in the spider web.**
35. **Go up the steps to the right.**
36. **Go into the narrow passage to the left of the family of skeletons lying feet out in the crypt.**
37. **Approach wine rack 1. Turn to face it, it's on your left.**
38. **Grab a bottle of wine.**
39. **Give the wine bottle to Fortunato.**
40. **Turn back to the right. Move forward into the passage, past the crypt on your left.**
41. **Turn right.**
42. **Approach wine rack 2. Turn towards it. It is on your left.**

43. Grab another bottle of wine.
44. Give the wine bottle to woozy Fortunato.

Soul Jump

Now you get your second chance to swap souls with Fortunato–if you passed up the first one. If you go for it this time, you complete the rest of the scenario as Fortunato.

To soul jump, click on Fortunato's twinkling eyes. Be quick about it, or your opportunity quickly passes. Then continue with Step 30 of The Cask of Amontillado-Victim scenario, below.

To pass up the soul jump–and continue with your murderous escapade–wait until your reflection fades from Fortunato's eyes. Continue with step 46 of this scenario, below.

45. Click on Fortunato–get the drunken fool out of your face!
46. Turn away from the wine rack.
47. Turn right twice.
48. Enter the passage.
49. Turn left.
50. Enter the passage.
51. Turn left after passing the single skeleton in the crypt.
52. Enter the passage.
53. Turn right when you see a large spine on the wall.
54. Enter the passage.
55. Turn left when you see three skulls on the wall.
56. Enter the open cavern.
57. Place the torch in the sconce.

58. Enter the dead-end room.
59. Follow Fortunato into the large crypt.
60. Chain the greedy fool!
61. Turn to the pile of bones beside the crypt.
62. Push the pile of bones away.
63. Grab a brick.
64. Place the brick on the bottom of the crypt opening.
And another brick. Quick, cover your ears! Nooooooooo!
65. Place a third brick. Share one last chuckle with Fortunato at his . . .
heh-heh . . . good fortune. Watch as the bricks pile up.
66. Add a fourth brick to complete the course.
Watch the wall climb as late the hours grow.
67. Add a fifth brick . . . for the love of God!
68. Make sure the jingling jester is still entombed . . .
then add a final brick to complete your snare.
69. Now, scoot. Make tracks out of those damp catacombs
before your heart, like your mind, grows sick.

Cheers! You made it through the dank, dark catacombs.

See "Beam Me Back, Uncle Eddie," page 203.

MALEVOLENCE PORTAL

Victim: Fortunato

If you can't keep your hands off the wine glass in the Malevolence Conservatory, you enter Cask of Amontillado looking from a bridge into the rippling waters of the canal below. The water reflects your image: Fortunato . . . in full jester regalia.

Follow the slimy brick road and quench your insatiable thirst (and that of your avenger) forevermore. Begin here:

1. **Heads up!–if you can tear yourself away from your comely reflection.**
2. **Caress the masked figure peering at you from the street.**

Soul Jump

Immediately after you caress Montresor, your first soul jumping opportunity presents itself. If you go for it, you continue the scenario as Montresor from this point forward–or until your next (and last) soul jump opportunity later in the scenario.

To soul jump, click on Montresor's twinkling eyes-*while Fortunato's reflection appears in them*. You have between five and ten seconds to click. Then, continue with Step 1 of the Cask of Amontillado-Villain scenario, above.

To pass up the soul jump–and retain your murderous identity–wait until your reflection fades from Montresor's eyes. Then, proceed with step 3 of this scenario.

3. Pay the masked moron no mind. Let him stare enviously as you make the rounds of your fellow revelers. Click on the close-up of Montresor (after his eyes stop twinkling).
4. Approach Desdemona and engage in flirtatious repartee.
5. Caress her cleavage.
6. Approach Luchesi and engage in speculative shop-talk. (You must face him.)
7. Caress Luchesi.
8. Never one to resist temptation, accept Luchesi's offer– grab the wine glass.
9. Approach the Sycophant.
10. Caress the Sychophant's medallion and let your paranoia go wild.
11. Approach giddy Emilia.
12. Turn to face the street.
13. Caress the statue of the woman, from a distance.
14. Approach Desdemona.
15. Caress Desdemona's cleavage.
16. Move to stand at the bridge rail directly next to the Sycophant, again facing the masked loner on the street.
17. Click on the masked figure on the street, still silently observing the revelers from afar.
18. Leave the bridge. Go to the street.
19. Approach the beggar on the corner (left-click at street intersection, then forward-click).
20. Turn to face Montresor.
21. Turn toward the bridge.
22. Turn back to face Montresor . . . Amontillado, you say?
23. Turn to look at Luchesi on the bridge.

24. Turn back to Montresor, your mind made up to go.
25. Leave the street carnival, accompanied by Montresor. (Click on Montresor).
26. Enter through the gates to Montresor's estate.
27. Move to the vault.
28. Approach the insignia on the vault door.
29. Open the vault door. Enter.
30. Enter the catacombs.
31. Return to the vault entrance.
32. Grab the torch.
33. Re-enter the catacombs, holding the torch.
34. Go down into the catacombs.
35. Enter the passage to the right. Follow the passage to the cavern containing a family crypt.
36. Move toward the alcove containing the skeletons.
37. Caress the skeletons.
38. Turn left.
39. Enter the passage.
40. Approach the wine rack (it's on the left).
41. Grab a bottle. Enjoy!
42. Turn left to face Montresor.

Soul Jump

Now, you get your second soul jump opportunity–if you did not take the first one. If you go for it this time, you complete the rest of the scenario as Montresor.

To soul jump, click on Montresor's twinkling eyes. Remember, move fast. Continue with step 30 of the Cask of Amontillado-Villain scenario, above.

Quick Tour Five

To pass up the soul jump, wait until your reflection fades from Monti's eyes. Click on Montresor. Then continue with step 43 of this scenario, below.

43. **Turn back to the passageway (turn left twice or right twice).**
44. **Move forward past the crypt on your left.**
45. **Turn right.**
46. **Pass up the second wine rack–you've had enough already!**
47. **Turn right, so that your back faces the second wine rack.**
48. **Enter the arched passageway.**
49. **Turn left.**
50. **Enter the passageway. Approach the crypt housing a single skeleton.**
51. **Turn left, just after passing the single-skeleton crypt (still partially visible to the far right).**
52. **Enter the passageway (bear right).**
53. **Approach the mason insignia on the cavern wall.**
54. **Turn right to face Montresor.**
55. **Approach Montresor.**
56. **Turn left.**
57. **Enter the large cavern.**
58. **Place the torch in the sconce.**
59. **Turn right.**
60. **Enter the resting place of the Amontillado–and other unfortunate fellows. Wait as your fate is sealed . . . or rather, chained.**
61. **Turn from side to side (left to right) repeatedly as the avenging mason carries out his sweet revenge . . . for the love of God.**
62. **Caress the brick wall. A lot of good your riches will do where you're going, eh, Fortunato?**

63. Caress the wine bottle. Do visions of bottles and bottles of Amontillado dance in your head?

64. Caress your cell mate.

65. Click on the wall of your prison. Bid a fond farewell to your devoted family–and enter the toasty den of Hell.

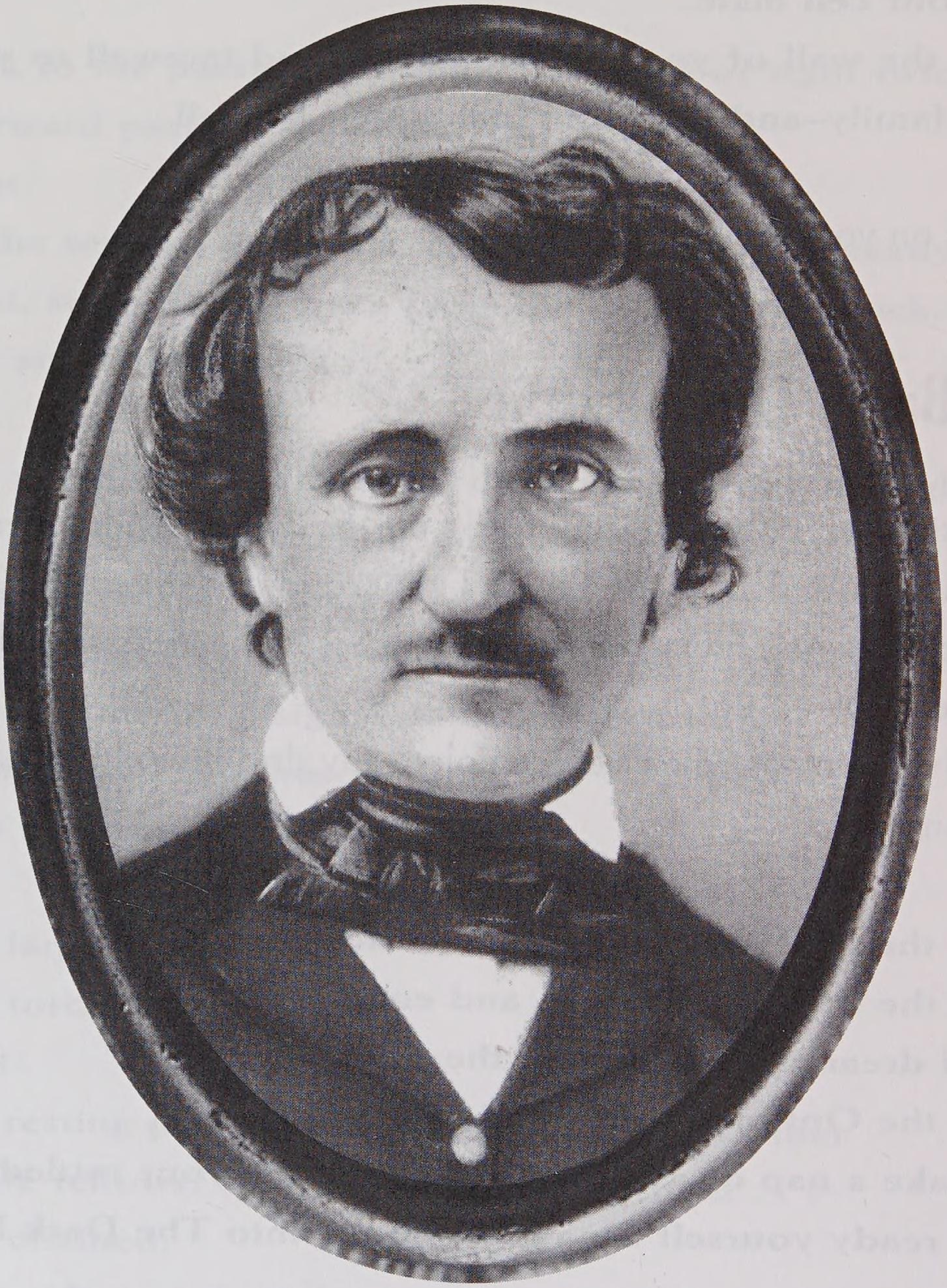
Guess the joke's on you, jester!

Beam Me Back, Uncle Eddie

At the conclusion of either of the Cask of the Amontillado scenarios, you are automatically transported back to the waking world and into the Conservatory of Edwin's house of horrors. From here, you can tackle the next sordid chapter of the Malevolence scenario.

Actually, at this point–as when you complete any dream world scenario–you can do one of three things:

- **Complete the next Malevolence sequence.**
- **Return to the Phrenology Map and enter a previously completed dream scenario from there.**
- **Return to the Options screen and select Quit. Then go take a nap or a spot of tea to soothe your rattled nerves–to ready yourself for your journey into The Dark Eye.**



Appendix A

The Inimitable Poe

For Edgar Allan Poe fans everywhere, the introduction of a Poe-inspired interactive game is a dream—or rather, nightmare—come true. We, for two, profusely thank Inscape for a delightfully wicked experience that does the brilliant Poe justice in its twisted creativity and mind-bending challenge.

Those who know his work but not the man, or who don't know Poe from Proust, may wonder just who was this mad spinner of macabre tales. Why is it that, nearly 150 years after his death, the mere mention of the name Edgar Allan Poe brings a tingle to the spine and conjures up images from his immortal works? Ravens! Brick tombs! Pulsating hearts! Black cats! Teeth, teeth, teeth!

This short biography gives you the low-down on the master of mystery, Edgar Allan Poe.

• • •

Edgar Allan Poe is regarded as America's greatest mystery and suspense writer. In fact, he invented the modern detective story. In his relatively short lifetime (40 years), he wrote and published 68 tales and 47 poems, as well as the short novel, The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket. *Poe also eked out a living as a journalist and*

magazine editor. A number of his literary and theatrical critiques are included in some collections of his published work. Poe was the first American author to be widely read abroad, especially in France. In 1910, he was elected to the United States Hall of Fame.

Edgar Poe was born in Boston on January 19, 1809, to David Poe, Jr., an Irish immigrant, and Elizabeth Arnold Poe, an English immigrant, both actors in the Boston Theatre. When his mother died in 1811, Poe's father had already abandoned the family. Edgar's younger brother was taken in by his maternal grandparents. His sister was taken in by strangers, the Mackenzies, and Edgar became the charge of a wealthy, barren Richmond (VA) couple, Mr. and Mrs. John Allan.

Though they never adopted him and Mr. Allan never "took" to him, Poe spent the rest of his childhood in the relative comfort of their home. By the time he entered the University of Virginia at age 17, Poe was painfully aware of his insecure status within the Allan family. Still, he held onto hope that he would one day be named heir to the Allan's considerable estate. It was not to be.

Poe did inherit his mother's charm, creative tendencies, and fragile disposition—and his father's legacy of alcoholism and gambling. Nervous and unstable, unable to tolerate liquor, he quickly found himself deep in debt. After just a few months of school, Allan abruptly removed him from school and cut off his allowance.

He fled to Boston in 1827. There, he persuaded a printer to publish some of his early poems in a pamphlet entitled Tamerlane and Other Poems, *under the simple byline, "By a Bostonian."*

Soon after, he enlisted in the Army, rising to regimental sergeant major within two years. When Mrs. Allan died in 1829, Edgar was honorably discharged from the service. Aspiring to become an officer, he entered West Point in 1829.

However, he hated the discipline and blatantly rebelled, and after eight months, vas expelled. By then, Mr. Allan had remarried, and Poe lost any chance of ecoming his heir.

Despondent and nervous, he stayed with his father's sister Clemm in Baltimore nd struggled to earn a living as a magazine writer and editor. In 1833, he won $50 first prize in a short-story contest for his tale, "MS. Found in a Bottle." In 1835, he became editor of the Southern Literary Messenger. During hat time, he married his 13-year-old cousin Virginia.

For the next several years, Poe earned praise but little money for his work. During that time, his beloved Virginia, who never bore him children, developed uberculosis. She grew increasingly more ill. As her health deteriorated and he ontinued to earn a mediocre wage as a writer and editor, Poe also grew weaker nd more distracted. With little food or fuel in their home, Virginia Poe died on January 30, 1847. Her death devastated Poe and he feel into a deep psychotic lepression.

His work and health suffered greatly after his wife's death. He tried to solace imself by courting numerous women. During this erratic period, his lecture "Eureka," a primordial explanation of the universe viewed by some critics of he time as a masterpiece and gibberish by others, was published (1848).

In 1849, he became engaged to his childhood sweetheart, who had become a vealthy widow. He made wedding plans and left Richmond headed for New York City, disappearing enroute in Baltimore. Five days after his lisappearance, Poe was found—drunk, drugged, and near death. He died four lays later on October 7, 1849, without ever regaining consciousness. He is uried in Baltimore.

Salute, Master Poe! May you rest in peace.

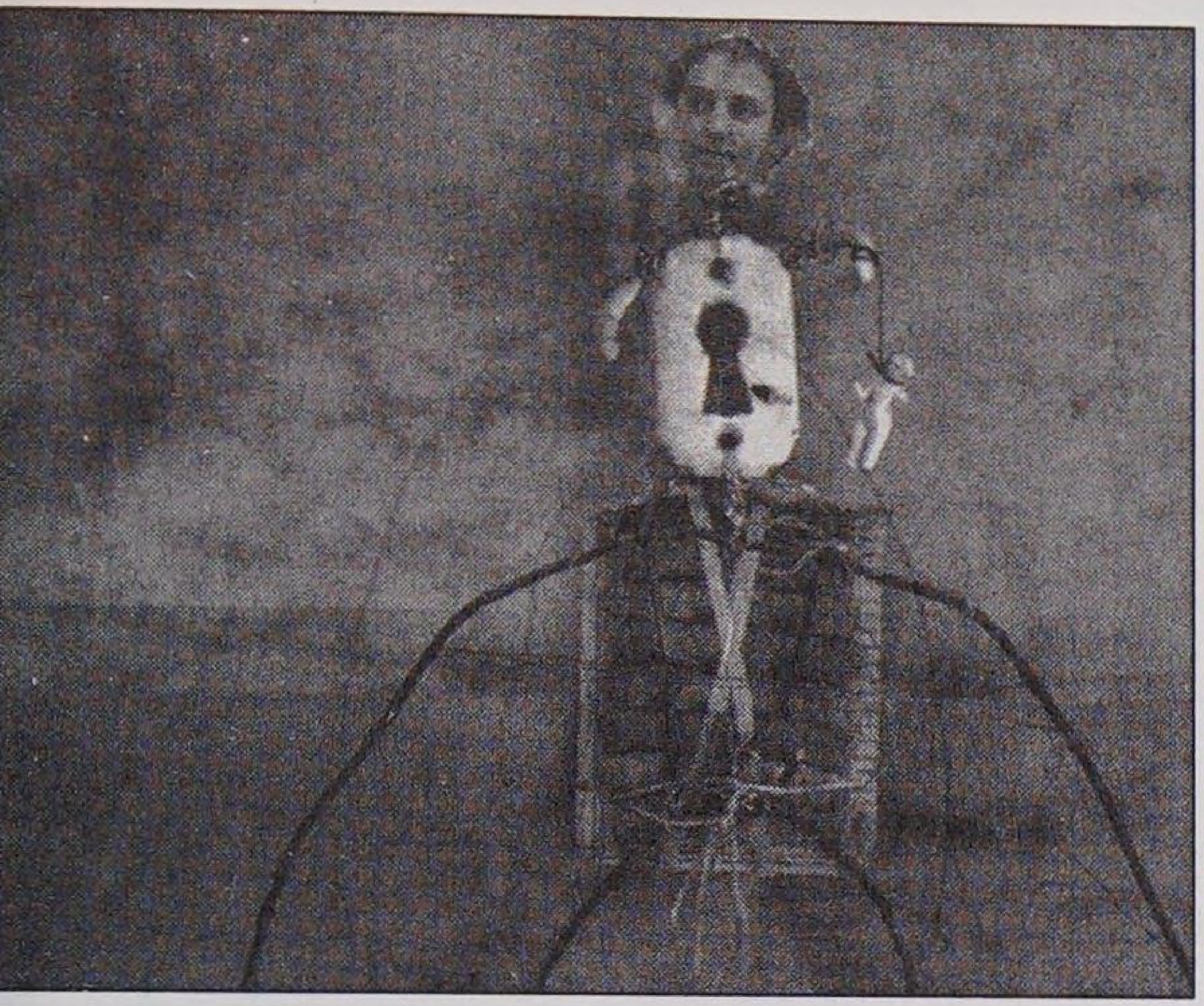
Appendix B

Annabel Lee

It was many and many a year ago,
In a kingdom by the sea,
That a maiden there lived whom
you may know
By the name of Annabel Lee;
And this maiden she lived with no
other thought
Than to love and be loved by me.

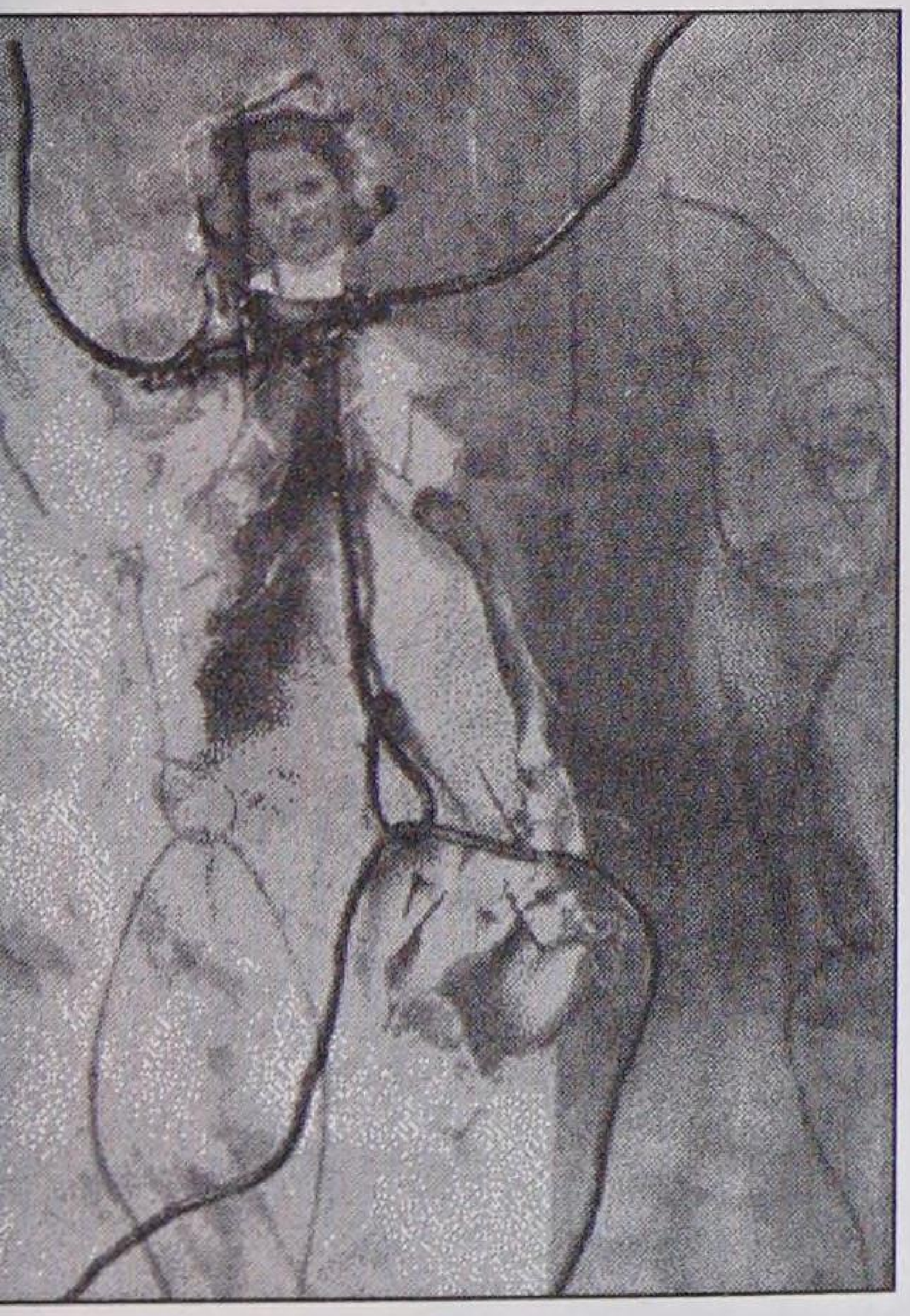
I was a child and she was a child,
In this kingdom by the sea,
But we loved with a love that was more than love—
I and my Annabel Lee—
With a love that the winged seraphs of heaven
Coveted her and me.

And this was the reason that, long ago,
In this kingdom by the sea,
A wind blew out of a cloud, chilling
My beautiful Annabel Lee;
So that her highborn kinsmen came
And bore her away from me,
To shut her up in a sepulchre
In this kingdom by the sea.



The angels, not half so happy in heaven,
Went envying her and me—
Yes!—that was the reason (as all men know,
In this kingdom by the sea)
That the wind came out of the cloud by night
Chilling and killing my Annabel Lee.

But our love it was stronger by far than the love
Of those who were older than we—
Of many far wiser than we—
And neither the angels in heaven above
Nor the demons down under the sea,
Can ever dissever my soul from the soul
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee:



For the moon never beams, without bringing me dreams
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
And the stars never rise, but I feel the bright eyes
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee:
And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side
Of my darling—my darling—my life and my bride,
In the sepulchre there by the sea—
In her tomb by the sounding sea.

Edgar Allan Poe, 1849

Appendix C

Berenice

DICEBANT mihi sodales, si sepulchrum amicae visitarem, curas meas aliquantulum fore levatas.–EBN ZAIAT

Misery is manifold. The wretchedness of earth is multiform. Overreaching the wide horizon as the rainbow, its hues are as various as the hues of the arch, as distinct too, yet as intimately blended. Overreaching the wide horizon as the rainbow! How is it that from beauty I have derived a type of unloveliness? from the covenant of peace a simile of sorrow? But as in ethics, evil is a consequence of good, so in fact, out of joy is sorrow born. Either the memory of past bliss is the anguish of to-day, or the agonies which are *have their origin in the ecstasies which* might have been.

My baptismal name is Egaeus, that of my family I will not mention. Yet there are no towers in the land more time-honoured than my gloomy, grey, hereditary halls. Our line has been called a race of visionaries; and in many striking particulars–in the character of the family mansion, in the frescoes of the chief saloon, in the tapestries of the dormitories, in the chiselling of some buttresses in the annoury, but more especially in the gallery of antique paintings, in the fashion of the library chamber, and lastly, in the very peculiar nature of the library's contents–there is more than sufficient evidence to warrant the belief.

The recollections of my earliest years are connected with that chamber, and with its volumes–of which latter I will say no more. Here died my mother. Herein was I born. But it is mere idleness to say that I had not lived *before–that the soul has no previous existence. You deny it–let us not argue the matter. Convinced myself, I seek not to convince. There is, however, a remembrance of acrial forms–of spiritual and meaning eyes–of sounds, musical yet sad; a remembrance which will not be excluded; a memory like a shadow–vague, variable, indefinite, unsteady; and like a shadow, too, in the impossibility of my getting rid of it while the sunlight of my reason shall exist.*

In that chamber I was born. Thus awaking from the long night of what seemed, but was not, nonentity, at once into the very regions of fairy land–into a palace of imagination–into the wild dominions of monastic thought and erudition–it is not singular that I gazed around me with a startled and ardent eye–that I loitered away my boyhood in books and dissipated my youth in revery; but it is singular, that as years rolled away, and the noon of manhood found me still in the mansion of my fathers–it is wonderful what stagnation there fell upon the springs of my life–wonderful how total an inversion took place in the character of my commonest thought. The realities of the world affected me as visions, and as visions only, while the wild ideas of the land of dreams became, in turn, not the material of my every-day existence, but in very deed that existence utterly and solely in itself.

Berenice and I were cousins, and we grew up together in my paternal halls. Yet differently we grew–I, ill of health, and buried in gloom–she, agile, graceful, and overflowing with energy; hers the ramble on the hill-side–mine, the studies of the cloister; I, living within my own heart, and addicted, body and soul, to the most intense and painful meditation–she, roaming carelessly through life, with no thought of the shadows in her path, or the silent flight of the raven-winged hours. Berenice!–Icall upon her name–Berenice!–and from the gray ruins of memory a thousand tumultuous recollections are startled at the sound! Ah, vividly is her image before me now, as in the early days of her lightheartedness and joy! Oh, gorgeous yet fantastic beauty! Oh, sylph amid the shrubberies of Arnheim! Oh, naiad among its fountains! And then–then all is mystery and terror, and a tale which should not be told. Disease–a fatal disease, fell like the simoom upon her frame; and even, while I gazed upon her, the spirit of change swept over her, pervading her mind, her habits and her character, and, in a manner the most subtle and terrible, disturbing even the identity of her *person! Alas! the destroyer came and went!—and the victim—where was she? I knew her not—or knew her no longer as Berenice!*

Among the numerous train of maladies superinduced ty that fatal and primary one which effected a revolution of so horrible a kind in the moral and physical being of my cousin, may be mentioned as the most distressing and obstinate in its nature, a species of epilepsy not unfrequently terminating in trance *itself—trance very nearly resembling positive dissolution, and from which her manner of recovery was, in most instances, startlingly abrupt. In the meantime, my own disease—for I have been told that I should call it by no other appellation—my own disease, then, grew rapidly upon me, and assumed finally a monomaniac character of a novel and extraordinary form—hourly and momently gaining vigor—and at length obtaining over me the most incomprehensible ascendency. This monomania, if I must so term it, consisted in a morbid irritability of those properties of the mind in metaphysical science termed the* attentive. *It is more than probable that I am not understood; but I fear, indeed, that it is in no manner possible to convey to the mind of the merely general reader, an adequate idea of that nervous* intensity of interest *with which, in my case, the powers of meditation (not to speak technically) busied and buried themselves, in the contemplation of even the most ordinary objects of the universe.*

To muse for long unwearied hours, with my attention riveted to some frivolous device on the margin or in the typography of a book; to become absorbed, for the better part of a summer's day, in a quaint shadow falling aslant upon the tapestry or upon the floor; to lose myself, for an entire night, in watching the steady flame of a lamp, or the embers of a fire, to dream away whole days over the perfume of a flower; to repeat, monotonously, some common word, until the sound, by dint of frequent repetition, ceased to convey any idea whatever to the mind; to lose all sense of motion or physical existence, by means of absolute bodily quiescence long and obstinately persevered in: such were a few of the most common and least pernicious vagaries induced by a condition of the mental faculties, not, indeed, altogether unparalleled, but certainly bidding defiance to any thing like analysis or explanation.

Yet let me not be misapprehended. The undue, earnest, and morbid attention thus excited by objects in their own nature frivolous, must not be confounded in character with that ruminating propensity common to all mankind, and more expecially indulged in by persons of ardent imagination. It was not even, as might be at first supposed, an extreme condition, or exaggeration of such propensity, but primarily and essentially distinct and different. In the one instance, the dreamer, or enthusiast, being interested by an object usually not frivolous, imperceptibly loses sight of this object in a wilderness of deductions and suggestions issuing therefrom, until, at the conclusion of a day-dream often replete with luxury, he finds the incitamentum, or first cause of his musings, entirely vanished and forgotten. In my case, the primary object was invariably frivolous, although assuming, through the medium of my distempered vision, a refracted and unreal importance. Few deductions, if any, were made; and those few pertinaciously returning in upon the original object as a centre. The meditations were never pleasurable; and, at the termination of the revery, the first cause, so far from being out of sight, had attained that supernaturally exaggerated interest which was the prevailing feature of the disease. In a word, the powers of mind more particularly exercised were, with me, as I have said before, the attentive, and are, with the day-dreamer, the speculative.

My books, at this epoch, if they did not actually serve to irritate the disorder, partook, it will be perceived, largely, in their imaginative and inconsequential nature, of the characteristic qualities of the disorder itself. I well remember, among others, the treatise of the noble Italian, Coelius Secundus Curio, "De Amplitudine Beati Regni Dei"; St. Austin's great work, "The City of God"; and Tertullian's "De Carne Christi," in which the paradoxical sentence, "Mortuus est Dei filius; credibile est quia ineptum est; et sepultus resurrexit; certum est quid impossible est," occupied my undivided time, for many weeks of laborious and fruitless investigation.

Thus it will appear that, shaken from its balance only by trivial things, my reason bore resemblance to that ocean-crag spoken of by Ptolemy Hephestion, which steadily resisting the attacks of human violence, and the fiercer fury of the waters and the winds, trembled only to the touch of the flower called Asphodel. And although, to a careless thinker, it might appear a matter beyond doubt, that the alteration produced by her unhappy malady, in the moral condition of Berenice, would afford me many objects for the exercise of that intense and abnormal meditation whose nature I have been at some trouble in explaining, yet such was not in any degree the case. In the lucid intervals of my infirmity, her calamity, indeed, gave me pain, and, taking deeply to heart that total wreck of her fair and gentle life, I did not fail to ponder, frequently and bitterly, upon the wonder-working means by which so strange a revolution had been so suddenly brought to pass. But these reflections partook not of the idiosyncrasy of my disease, and were such as would have occurred, under similar circumstances, to the ordinary mass of mankind. True to its own character, my disorder revelled in the less important but more startling changes wrought in the physical frame if Berenice–in the singular and most appalling distortion of her personal identity.

During the brightest days of her unparalleled beauty, most surely I had never loved her. In the strange anomaly of my existence, feelings with me, had never been of the heart, and my passions always were of the mind. Trough the gray of the early morning–among the trellised shadows of the forest at noonday–and in the silence of my library at night–she had flitted by my eyes, and I had seen her–not as the living and breathing Berenice, but at the Berenice of a dream; not as a being of the earth, earthly, but as the abstraction of such a being; not as a thing to admire, but to analyze; not as an object of love, but as the theme of the most abstruse although desultory speculation. And now–now I shuddered in her presence, and grew pale at her approach; yet, bitterly lamenting her fallen and desolate condition, I called to mind that she had loved me long, and, in an evil moment, I spoke to her of marriage.

And at length the period of our nuptials was approaching, when, upon an afternoon in the winter of the year–one of those unseasonably warm, calm, and misty days which are the nurse of the beautiful Halcyon*,–I sat (and sat, as I thought, alone) in the inner apartment of the library. But uplifting my eyes, I saw that Berenice stood before me.

Was it my own excited imagination–or the misty influence of the atmosphere–or the uncertain twilight of the chamber–or the gray draperies which fell around her figure–that caused in it so vacillating and indistinct an outline? I could not tell. She spoke no word; and I–not for words could I have uttered a syllable. An icy chill ran through my frame; a sense of insufferable anxiety oppressed me; a consuming curiosity pervaded my soul; and, sinking back upon the chair, I remained *for some time breathless and motionless, with my eyes riveted upon her person. Alas! its emaciation was excessive, and not one vestige of the former being lurked in any single line of the contour. My burning glances at length fell upon the face.*

The forehead was high, and very pale, and singularly placid; and the once jetty hair fell partially over it, and overshadowed the hollow temples with innumerable ringlets, now of a vivid yellow, and jarring discordantly, in their fantastic character, with the reigning melancholy of the countenance. The eyes were lifeless, and lustreless, and seemingly pupilless, and I shrank involuntarily from their glassy stare to the contemplation of the thin and shrunken lips. They parted; and in a smile of peculiar meaning, the teeth *of the changed Berenice disclosed themselves slowly to my view. Would to God that I had never beheld them, or that, having done so, I had died!*

The shutting of a door disturbed me, and looking up, I found that my cousin had departed from the chamber. But from the disordered chamber of my brain, had not, alas! departed, and would not be driven away, the white and ghastly spectrum *of the teeth. Not a speck on their surface—not a shade on their enamel—not an indenture in their edges—but what the brief period of her smile had sufficed to brand in upon my memory. I saw them* now *even more unequivocally than I beheld them* then. *The teeth!—the teeth!—they were here, and there, and everywhere, and visibly and palpably before me; long, narrow, and excessively white, with the pale lips writhing about them, as in the very moment of their first terrible development. Then came the full fury of my* nonomania, *and I struggled in vain against its strange and irresistible influence. In the multiplied objects of the external world I had no thoughts but for the teeth. For these I longed with a frenzied desire. All other matters and all different interests became absorbed in their single contemplation. They—they alone were present to the mental eye, and they, in their sole individuality, became the essence of my mental life. I held them in every light. I turned them in every attitude. I surveyed their characteristics. I dwelt upon their peculiarities. I pondered upon their conformation. I mused upon the alteration in their nature. I shuddered as I assigned to them, in imagination, a sensitive and sentient power, and even*

when unassisted by the lips, a capability of moral expression. Of Mad'-selle Salle it has been well said: "Que tous ses pas etaient des sentiments," and of Berenice I more seriously believed que tous ses dents etaient des idees. Des idees!–ah, here was the idiotic thought that destroyed me! Des idees!–ah, therefore it was that I coveted them so madly! I felt that their possession could alone ever restore me to peace, in giving me back to reason.

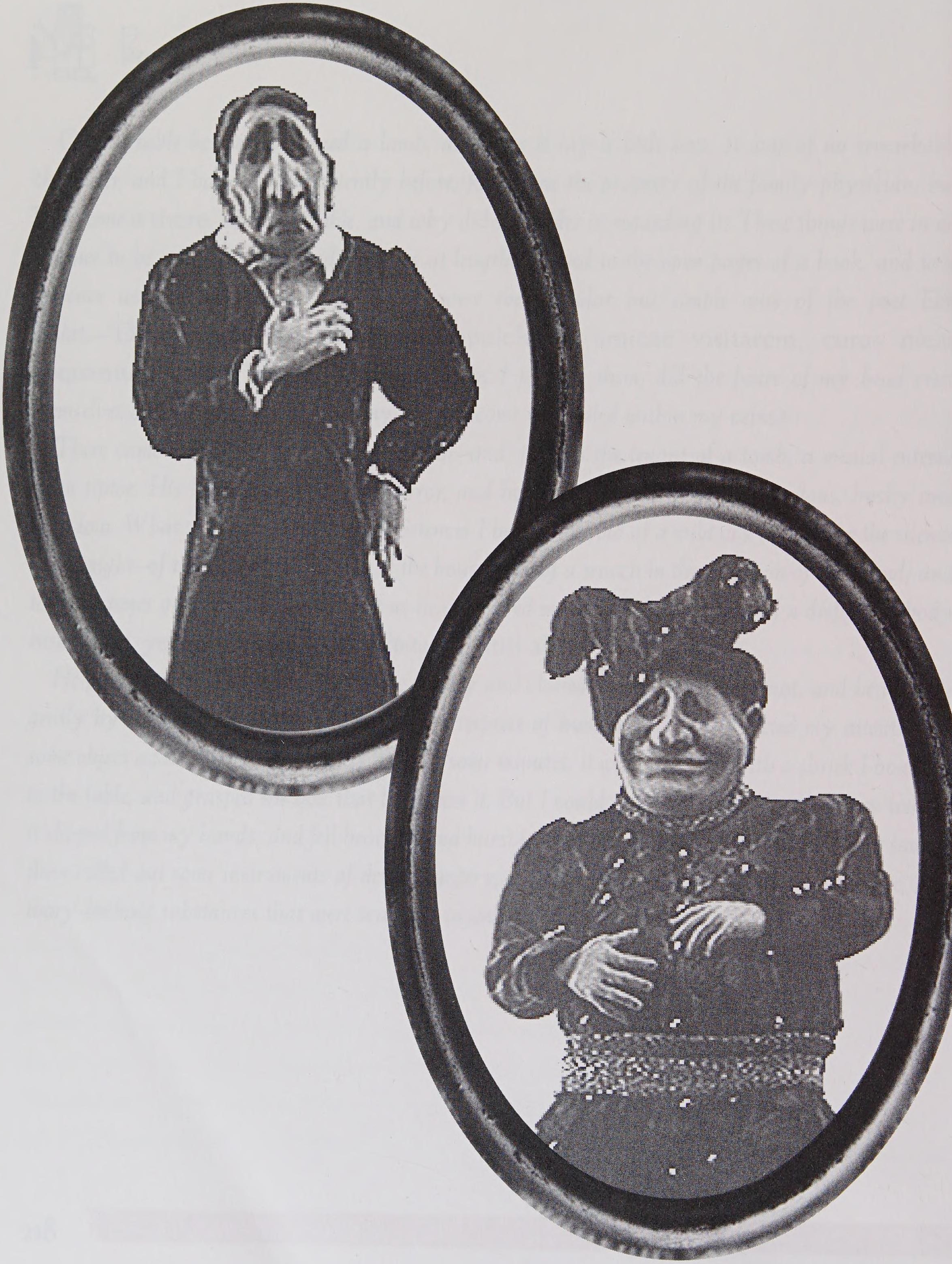
And the evening closed in upon me thus–and then the darkness came, and tarried, and went–and the day again dawned–and the mists of a second night were now gathering around–and still I sat motionless in that solitary room–and still I sat buried in meditation–and still the phantasma of the teeth maintained its terrible ascendancy, as, with the most vivid and hideous distinctness, it floated about amid the changing lights and shadows of the chamber. At length there broke in upon my dreams a cry as of horror and dismay; and thereunto, after a pause, succeeded the sound of troubled voices, intermingled with many low moanings of sorrow or of pain. I arose from my seat, and throwing open one of the doors of the library, saw standing out in the antechamber a servant maiden, all in tears, who told me that Berenice was–no more! She had been seized with epilepsy in the early morning, and now, at the closing in of the night the grave was ready for its tenant, and all the preparations for the burial were completed.

I found myself sitting in the library and again sitting there alone. It seemed to me that I had newly awakened from a confused and exciting dream. I knew that it was now midnight, and I was well aware, that since the setting of the sun, Berenice had been interred. But of that dreary period which intervened I had no positive, at least no definite, comprehension. Yet its memory was replete with horror–horror more horrible from being vague, and terror more terrible from ambiguity. It was a fearful page in the record of my existence, written all over with dim, and hideous, and unintelligible recollections. I strived to decypher them, but in vain; while ever and anon, like the spirit of a departed sound, the shrill and piercing shriek of a female voice seemed to be ringing in my ears. I had done a deed–what was it? I asked myself the question aloud, and the whispering echoes of the chamber answered me–"what was it?"

On the table beside me burned a lamp, and near it lay a little box. It was of no remarkable character, and I had seen it frequently before, for it was the property of the family physician; but how came it there, *upon my table, and why did I shudder in regarding it? These things were in no manner to be accounted for, and my eyes at length dropped to the open pages of a book, and to a sentence underscored therein. The words were the singular but simple ones of the poet Ebn Zaiat:–*"Dicebant mihi sodales si sepulchrum amicae visitarem, curas meas aliquantulum fore levatas." *Why, then, as I perused them, did the hairs of my head erect themselves on end, and the blood of my body become congealed within my veins?*

*There came a light tap at the library door–and, pale as the tenant of a tomb, a menial entered upon tiptoe. His looks were wild with terror, and he spoke to me in a voice tremulous, husky and very low. What said he?–some broken sentences I heard. He told of a wild cry disturbing the silence of the night–of the gathering together of the household–of a search in the direction of the sound; and then his tones grew thrillingly distinct as he whispered me of a violated grave–of a disfigured body enshrouded, yet still breathing–still palpitating–*still alive!

He pointed to my garments; they were muddy and clotted with gore. I spoke not, and he took me gently by the hand: it was indented with the impress of human nails. He directed my attention to some object against the wall. I looked at it for some minutes: it was a spade. With a shriek I bounded to the table, and grasped the box that lay upon it. But I could not force it open; and, in my tremor, it slipped from my hands, and fell heavily, and burst into pieces; and from it, with a rattling sound, there rolled out some instruments of dental surgery, intermingled with thirty-two small, white, and ivory-looking substances that were scattered to and fro about the floor.



Appendix D

The Cask of Amontillado

The thousand injuries of Fortunato I had borne as I best could, but when he ventured upon insult, I vowed revenge. You, who so well know the nature of my soul, will not suppose, however, that I gave utterance to a threat. At length I would be avenged; this was a point definitely settled—but the very definitiveness with which it was resolved, precluded the idea of risk. I must not only punish, but punish with impunity. A wrong is unredressed when retribution overtakes its redresser. It is equally unredressed when the avenger fails to make himself felt as such to him who has done the wrong.

It must be understood that neither by word nor deed had I given Fortunato cause to doubt my good will. I continued as was my wont, to smile in his face, and he did not perceive that my smile now was at the thought of his immolation.

He had a weak point—this Fortunato—although in other regards he was a man to be respected and even feared. He prided himself on his connoisseurship in wine. Few Italians have the true virtuoso spirit. For the most part their enthusiasm is adapted to suit the time and opportunity—to practice imposture upon the British and Austrian millionaires. In painting and gemmary Fortunato, like his country men, was a quack—but in the matter of old wines he was sincere. In this respect I did not differ from him materially: I was skilful in the Italian vintages myself, and bought largely whenever I could.

It was about dusk, one evening during the supreme madness of the carnival season, that I encountered my friend. He accosted me with excessive warmth, for he had been drinking much. The man wore motley. He had on a tight-fitting parti-striped dress, and his head was surmounted by the conical cap *and bells. I was so pleased to see him, that I thought I should never have done wringing his hand.*

I said to him: "My dear Fortunato, you are luckily met. How remarkably well you are looking to-day! But I have received a pipe of what passes for Amontillado, and I have my doubts."

"How?" said he. "Amontillado? A pipe? Impossible! And in the middle of the carnival!"

"I have my doubts," I replied; "and I was silly enough to pay the full Amontillado price withou consulting you in the matter. You were not to be found, and I was fearful of losing a bargain."

"Amontillado!"

"I have my doubts."

"Amontillado!"

"And I must satisfy them."

"Amontillado!"

"As you are engaged, I am on my way to Luchesi. If any one has a critical turn, it is he. He wil tell me—"

"Luchesi cannot tell Amontillado from Sherry."

"And yet some fools will have it that his taste is a match for your own."

"Come let us go."

"Whither?"

"To your vaults."

"My friend, no; I will not impose upon your good nature. I perceive you have an engagement. Luchesi—"

"I have no engagement;—come."

"My friend, no; it is not the engagement, but the severe cold with which I perceive you are afflicted. The vaults are insufferably damp. They are encrusted with nitre."

"Let us go, nevertheless. The cold is merely nothing. Amontillado! You have been imposed upon. And as for Luchesi, he cannot distinguish Sherry from Amontillado."

Thus speaking, Fortunato possessed himself of my arm. Putting on a mask of black silk, and drawing a roquelaire *closely about my person, I suffered him to hurry me to my palazzo.*

There were no attendants at home; they had absconded to make merry in honor of the time. I had old them that I should not return until the morning, and had given them explicit orders not to stir rom the house. These orders were sufficient, I well knew, to insure their immediate disappearance, one and all, as soon as my back was turned.

I took from their sconces two flambeaux, and giving one to Fortunato, bowed him through several uites of rooms to the archway that led into the vaults. I passed down a long and winding staircase, requesting him to be cautious as he followed. We came at length to the foot of the descent, and stood ogether on the damp ground of the catacombs of the Montresors.

The gait of my friend was unsteady, and the bells upon his cap jingled as he strode.

"The pipe?" said he.

"It is farther on," said I; "but observe the white web-work which leams from these cavern walls."

He turned toward me, and looked into my eyes with two filmy orbs that distilled the rheum of ntoxication.

"Nitre?" he asked, at length.

"Nitre," I replied. "How long have you had that cough?"

"Ugh! ugh! ugh!–ugh! ugh! ugh!–ugh! ugh! ugh!–ugh! ugh! ugh!–ugh! ugh! ugh!"

My poor friend found it impossible to reply for many minutes.

"It is nothing," he said, at last.

"Come," I said, with decision, "we will go back; your health is precious. You are rich, respected, admired, beloved; you are happy, as once I was. You are a man to be missed. For me it is no matter. We will go back; you will be ill, and I cannot be responsible. Besides, there is Luchesi–"

"Enough," he said; "the cough is a mere nothing; it will not kill me. I shall not die of a cough."

"True–true," I replied; "and, indeed, I had no intention of alarming you unnecessarily–but you hould use all proper caution. A draught of this Medoc will defend us from the damps."

Here I knocked off the neck of a bottle which I drew from a long row of its fellows that lay upon he mould.

"Drink," I said, presenting him the wine.

He raised it to his lips with a leer. He paused and nodded to me familiarly, while his bells jingled

"I drink," he said, "to the buried that repose around us."

"And I to your long life."

He again took my arm, and we proceeded.

"These vaults," he said, "are extensive."

"The Montresors," I replied, "were a great and numerous family."

"I forget your arms."

"A huge human foot d'or, in a field azure; the foot crushes a serpent rampant whose fangs ar imbedded in the heel."

"And the motto?"

"Nemo me impune lacessit."

"Good!" he said.

The wine sparkled in his eyes and the bells jingled. My own fancy grew warm with the Medoc We had passed through walls of piled bones, with casks and puncheons intermingling, into th inmost recesses of the catacombs. I paused again, and this time I made bold to seize Fortunato b an arm above the elbow.

"The nitre!" I said; "see, it increases. It hangs like moss upon the vaults. We are below the river' bed. The drops of moisture trickle among the bones. Come, we will go back ere it is too late. You cough–"

"It is nothing," he said; "let us go on. But first, another draught of the Medoc."

I broke and reached him a flagon of De Grave. He emptied it at a breath. His eyes flashed wit a fierce light. He laughed and threw the bottle upward with a gesticulation I did not understand.

I looked at him in surprise. He repeated the movement–a grotesque one.

"You do not comprehend?" he said.

"Not I," I replied.

"Then you are not of the brotherhood."

"How?"

"You are not of the masons."

"Yes, yes," I said; "yes, yes."

"You? Impossible! A mason?"

"A mason," I replied.

"A sign," he said.

"It is this," I answered, producing a trowel from beneath the folds of my roqelaire.

"You jest," he exclaimed, recoiling a few paces. "But let us proceed to the Amontillado."

"Be it so," I said, replacing the tool beneath the cloak, and again offering him my arm. He leaned upon it heavily. We continued our route in search of the Amontillado. We passed through a range of low arches, descended, passed on, and descending again, arrived at a deep crypt, in which the foulness of the air caused our flambeaux rather to glow than flame.

At the most remote end of the crypt there appeared another less spacious. Its walls had been lined with human remains, piled to the vault overhead, in the fashion of the great catacombs of Paris. Three sides of this interior crypt were still ornamented in this manner. From the fourth the bones had been thrown down, and lay promiscuously upon the earth, forming at one point a mound of some size. Within the wall thus exposed by the displacing of the bones, we perceived a still interior recess, in depth about four feet, in width three, in height six or seven. It seemed to have been constructed for no especial use within itself, but formed merely the interval between two of the colossal supports of the roof of the catacombs, and was backed by one of their circumscribing walls of solid granite.

It was in vain that Fortunato, uplifting his dull torch, endeavored to pry into the depth of the recess. Its termination the feeble light did not enable us to see.

"Proceed," I said; "herein is the Amontillado. As for Luchesi—"

"He is an ignoramus," interrupted my friend, as he stepped unsteadily forward, while I followed immediately at his heels. In an instant he had reached the extremity of the niche, and finding his progress arrested by the rock, stood stupidly bewildered. A moment more and I had fettered him to the granite. In its surface were two iron staples, distant from each other about two feet, horizontally. From one of these depended a short chain, from the other a padlock. Throwing the links about his

waist, it was but the work of a few seconds to secure it. He was too much astounded to resist. Withdrawing the key I stepped back from the recess.

"Pass your hand," I said, "over the wall; you cannot help feeling the nitre. Indeed it is very damp. Once more let me implore you to return. No? Then I must positively leave you. But I must first render you all the little attentions in my power."

"The Amontillado!" ejaculated my friend, not yet recovered from his astonishment.

"True," I replied; "the Amontillado."

As I said these words I busied myself among the pile of bones of which I have before spoken. Throwing them aside, I soon uncovered a quantity of building stone and mortar. With these materials and with the aid of my trowel, I began vigorously to wall up the entrance of the niche.

I had scarcely laid the first tier of the masonry when I discovered that the intoxication of Fortunato had in a great measure worn off. The earliest indication I had of this was a low moaning cry from the depth of the recess. It was not the cry of a drunken man. There was then a long and obstinate silence. I laid the second tier, and the third, and the fourth; and then I heard the furious vibrations of the chain. The noise lasted for several minutes, during which, that I might hearken to it with the more satisfaction, I ceased my labors and sat down upon the bones. When at last the clanking subsided, I resumed the trowel, and finished without interruption the fifth, the sixth, and the seventh tier. The wall was now nearly upon a level with my breast. I again paused, and holding the flambeaux over the mason-work, threw a few feeble rays upon the figure within.

A succession of loud and shrill screams, bursting suddenly from the throat of the chained form, seemed to thrust me violently back. For a brief moment I hesitated—I trembled. Unsheating my rapier, I began to grope with it about the recess; but the thought of an instant reassured me. I placed my hand upon the solid fabric of the catacombs, and felt satisfied. I reapproached the wall. I replied to the yells of him who clamored. I re-echoed–I aided–I surpassed them in volume and in strength. I did this, and the clamorer grew still.

It was now midnight, and my task was drawing to a close. I had completed the eighth, the ninth, and the tenth tier. I had finished a ortion of the last and the eleventh; there remained but a single stone to be fitted and plastered in. I struggled with its weight; I placed it partially in its destined position. But now there came from out the niche a low laugh that erected the hairs upon my head. It was succeeded by a sad voice, which I had difficulty in recognizing as that of the noble Rortunato. The voice said– "Ha! ha! ha!–he! he!–a very good joke indeed–an excellent jest. We will have many a rich laugh about it at the palazzo–he! he! he!–over our wine–he! he! he!"

"The Amontillado!" I said.

"He! he! he!–he! he! he! yes, the Amontillado. But is it not getting late? Will not they be awaiting us at the palazzo, the Lady Fortunato and the rest?Let us be gone."

"Yes," I said, "let us be gone."

"For the love of God, Montresor!"

"Yes," I said, "for the love of God!"

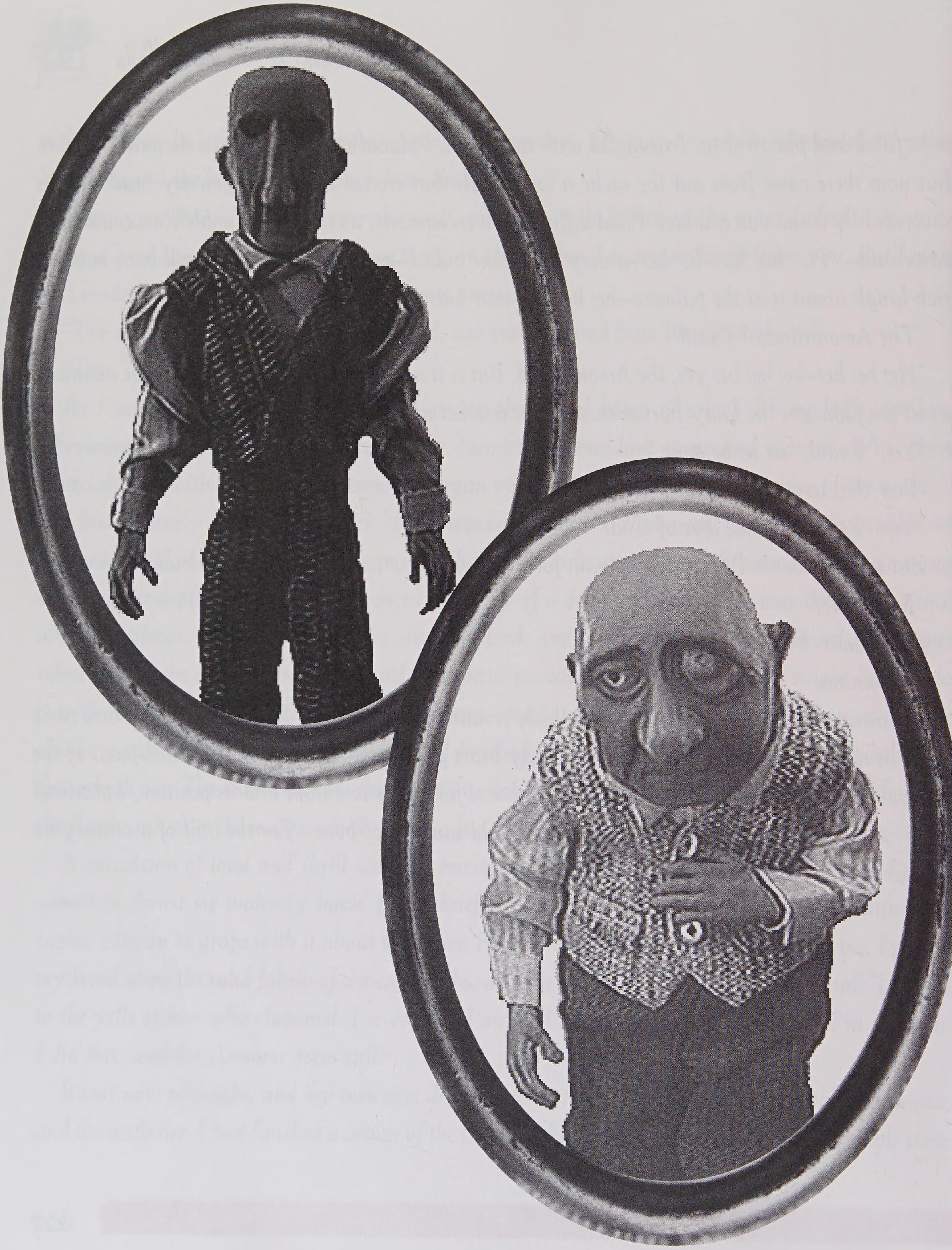
But to these words I hearkened in vain for a reply. I grew impatient. I called aloud;

"Fortunato!"

No answer. I called again;

"Fortunato!"

No answer still. I thrust a torch through the remaining aperture and let it fall within. There came forth in return only a jingling of the bells. My heart grew sick–on account of the dampness of the catacombs. I hastened to make an end of my labor. I forced the last stone into its position; I plastered it up. Against the new masonry I re-erected the old rampart of bones. For the half of a century no mortal has disturbed them. In pace requiescat!



Appendix E

The Tell-Tale Heart

True!—nervous—very, very dreadfully nervous I had been and am! but why will you say that I am mad? The disease had sharpened my senses—not destroyed—not dulled them. Above all was the sense of hearing acute. I heard all things in the heaven and in the earth. I heard many things in hell. How, then, am I mad? Hearken! and observe how healthily—how calmly I can tell you the whole story.

It is impossible to say how first the idea entered my brain; but once conceived, it haunted me day and night. Object there was none. Passion there was none. I loved the old man. He had never wronged me. He had never given me insult. For his gold I had no desire. I think it was his eye! yes, it was this! He had the eye of a vulture—a pale blue eye, with a film over it. Whenever it fell upon me, my blood ran cold; and so by degrees—very gradually—I made up my mind to take the life of the old man, and thus rid myself of the eye forever.

Now this is the point. You fancy me mad. Madmen know nothing. But you should have seen *me*. You should have seen how wisely I proceeded—with what caution—with what foresight—with what dissimulation I went to work!

I was never kinder to the old man than during the whole week before I killed him. And every night, about midnight, I turned the latch of his door and opened it—oh, so gently! And then, when I had made an opening sufficient for my head, I put in a dark lantern, all closed, closed, so that no light shone out, and then I thrust in my head. Oh, you would have laughed to see how cunningly I thrust it in! I moved it slowly—very, very slowly, so that I might not disturb the old man's sleep. It took me an hour to place my whole head *within the opening so far that I could see him as he lay upon his bed. Ha!—would a madman have been so wise as this? And then, when my head was well in the room, I undid the lantern cautiously—oh, so cautiously—cautiously (for the hinges creaked)—I undid it just so much that a single thin ray fell upon the vulture eye. And this I did for seven long nights—every night just at midnight—but I found the eye always closed; and so it was impossible to do the work; for it was not the old man who vexed me, but his Evil Eye. And every morning, when the day broke, I went boldly into the chamber, and spoke courageously to him, calling him by name in a hearty tone, and inquiring how he had passed the night. So you see he would have been a very profound old man, indeed, to suspect that every night, just at twelve, I looked in upon him while he slept.*

Upon the eighth night I was more than usually cautious in opening the door. A watch's minute hand moves more quickly than did mine. Never before that night had I felt *the extent of my own powers—of my sagacity. I could scarcely contain my feelings of triumph. To think that there I was, opening the door, little by little, and he not even to dream of my secret deeds or thoughts. I fairly chuckled at the idea; and perhaps he heard me; for he moved on the bed suddenly, as if startled. Now you may think that I drew back—but no. His room was as black as pitch with the thick darkness (for the shutters were close fastened, through fear of robbers), and so I knew that he could not see the opening of the door, and I kept pushing it on steadily, steadily.*

I had my head in, and was about to open the lantern, when my thumb slipped upon the tin fastening, and the old man sprang up in the bed, crying out—"Who's there?"

I kept quite still and said nothing. For a whole hour I did not move a muscle, and in the meantime I did not hear him lie down. He was still sitting up in the bed listening;—just as I have done, night after night, hearkening to the death watches in the wall.

Presently I heard a slight groan, and I knew it was the groan of mortal terror. It was not a groan of pain or of grief—oh no!—it was the low stifled sound that arises from the bottom of the soul when overcharged with awe. I knew the sound well. Many a night, just at midnight, when all the world slept, it has welled up from my own bosom, deepening, with its dreadful echo, the terrors that distracted me. I say I knew it well. I knew what the old man felt, and pitied him, although I chuckled at heart. I knew that he had been lying awake ever since the first slight noise, when he had turned in the bed. His fears had been ever since growing upon him. He had been trying to fancy them causeless, but could not. He had been saying to himself–"It is nothing but the wind in the chimney–it is only a mouse crossing the floor," or "it is merely a cricket which has made a single chirp." Yes, he has been trying to comfort himself with these suppositions; but he had found all in vain. All in vain; because Death, in approaching him, had stalked with his black shadow before him, and enveloped the victim. And it was the mournful influence of the unperceived shadow that caused him to feel–although he neither saw not heard–to feel the presence of my head within the room.

When I had waited a long time, very patiently, without hearing him lie down, I resolved to open a little–a very little crevice in the lantern. So I opened it–you cannot imagine how stealthily, stealthily–until, at length, a single dim ray, like the thread of the spider, shot from out the crevice and fell full upon the vulture eye.

It was open–wide, wide open–and I grew furious as I gazed upon it. I saw it with perfect distinctness–all a dull blue, with a hideous veil over it that chilled the very marrow in my bones; but I could see nothing else of the old man's face or person: for I had directed the ray as if by instinct, precisely upon the damned spot.

And now have I not told you that what you mistake for madness is but over-acuteness of the senses?–now, I say, there came to my ears a low, dull, quick sound, such as a watch makes when enveloped in cotton. I knew that sound well too. It was the beating of the old man's heart. It increased my fury, as the beating of a drum stimulates the soldier into courage.

But even yet I refrained and kept still. I scarcely breathed. I held the lantern motionless. I tried how steadily I could maintain the ray upon the eye. Meantime the hellish tattoo of the heart increased. It grew quicker and quicker, and louder and louder every instant. The old man's terror must have been extreme! It grew louder, I say, louder every moment!–do you mark me well? I have told you that I am nervous: so I am. And now at the dead hour of the night, amid the dreadful silence of that old house, so strange a noise as this excited me to uncontrollable terror. Yet, for some minutes longer I refrained and stood still. But the beating grew louder, louder! I thought the heart must burst.

And now a new anxiety seized me—the sound would be heard by a neighbor! The old man's hour had come! With a loud yell, I threw open the lantern and leaped into the room. He shrieked once—once only. In an instant I dragged him to the floor, and pulled the heavy bed over him. I then smiled gaily, to find the deed so far done. But, for many minutes, the heart beat on with a muffled sound. This, however, did not vex me; it would not be heard through the wall. At length it ceased. The old man was dead. I removed the bed and examined the corpse. Yes, he was stone, stone dead. I placed my hand upon the heart and held it there many minutes. There was no pulsation. He was stone dead. His eye would trouble me no more.

If still you tink me mad, you will think so no longer when I describe the wise precautions I took for the concealment of the body. The night waned, and I worked hastily, but in silence. First of all I dismembered the corpse. I cut off the head and the arms and the legs.

I then took up three planks from the flooring of the chamber, and deposited all between the scantlings. I then replaced the boards so cleverly, so cunningly, that no human eye—not even his—could have detected any thing wrong. There was nothing to wash out—no stain of any kind—no blood-spot whatever. I had been too wary for that. A tub had caught all—ha! ha!

When I made an end of these labors, it was four o'clock—still dark as midnight. As the bell sounded the hour, there came a knocking at the street door. I went down to open it with a light heart,—for what had I now to fear? There entered three men, who introduced themselves, with perfect suavity, as officers of the police. A shriek had been heard by a neighbor during the night: suspicion of foul play had been aroused; information had been lodged at the police office, and they (the officers) had been deputed to search the premises.

I smiled,—for what had I to fear? I bade the gentlemen welcome. The shriek, I said, was my own in a dream. The old man, I mentioned, was absent in the country. I took my visitors all over the house. I bade them search—search well. I led them, at length, to his chamber. I showed them his treasures, secure, undisturbed. In the enthusiasm of my confidence, I brought chairs into the room, and desired them here to rest from their fatigues, while I myself, in the wild audacity of my perfect triumph, placed my own seat upon the very spot beneath which reposed the corpse of the victim.

The officers were satisfied. My manner had convinced them. I was singularly at ease. They sat, and while I answered cheerily, they chatted of familiar things. But, ere long, I felt myself getting pale and wished them gone. My head ached, and I fancied a ringing in my ears: but still they sat and still chatted. The ringing became more distinct:–it continued and became more distinct: I talked more freely to get rid of the feeling: but it continued and gained definitiveness—until at length, I found that the noise was not within my ears.

No doubt I now grew very pale;–but I talked more fluently, and with a heightened voice. Yet the sound increased–and what could I do? It was a low, dull, quick sound–much such a sound as a watch makes when enveloped in cotton. I gasped for breath–and yet the officers heard it not. I talked more quickly–more vehemently; but the noise steadily increased. I arose and argued about trifles, in a high key and with violent gesticulations, but the noise steadily increased. Why would they not be gone? I paced the floor to and fro with heavy strides, as if excited to fury by the observation of the men–but the noise steadily increased. Oh God! what could I do? I foamed–I raved–I swore. I swung the chair upon which I had been sitting, and grated it upon the boards, but the noise arose over all and continually increased. It grew louder–louder–louder! And still the men chatted pleasantly, and smiled. Was it possible they heard not? Almighty God!–no, no!. They heard!–they suspected!–they knew![they were making a mockery of my horror!–this I thought, and this I think.But any thing was better than this agony! Any thing was more tolerable than this derision! I could bear those hypocritical smiles no longer! I felt that I must scream or die!–and now–again!–hark! louder! louder! louder!–

"villains!" I shrieked, "dissemble no more!" I admit the deed!–tear up the plank!–here, here! It is the beating of his hideous heart!

Appendix F

The Masque of the Red Death

The "Red Death" had long devastated the country. No pestilence had ever been so fatal, or so hideous. Blood was its Avatar and its seal-the redness and the horror of blood. There were sharp pains, and sudden dizziness, and then profuse bleeding at the pores, with dissolution. The scarlet stains upon the body and especially upon the face of the victim, were the pest ban which shut him out from the aid and from the sympathy of his fellow-men. And the whole seizure, progress, and termination of the disease, were the incidents of half an hour.

But the Prince Prospero was happy and dauntless and sagacious. When his dominions were half depopulated, he summoned to his presence a thousand hale and light-hearted friends from among the knights and dames of his court, and with these retired to the deep seclusion of one of his castellated abbeys. This was an extensive and magnificent structure, the creation of the prince's own eccentric yet august taste. A strong and lofty wall girdled it in. This wall had gates of iron. The courtiers, having entered, brought furnaces and massy hammers and welded the bolts. They resolved to leave means neither of ingress or egress to the sudden impulses of despair or of frenzy from within. The abbey was amply provisioned. With such precautions the courtiers might bid defiance to contagion. The external world could take care of itself. In the meantime it was folly to grieve, or to think. The prince had provided all the appliances of pleasure. There were buffoons, there were improvisatori, there *were ballet-dancers, there were musicians, there was Beauty, there was wine. All these and security were within. Without was the "Red Death."*

It was toward the close of the fifth or sixth month of his seclusion, and while the pestilence raged most furiously abroad, that the Prince Prospero entertained his thousands friends at a masked ball of the most unusual magnificence.

It was a voluptuous scene, that masquerade. But first let me tell of the rooms in which it was held. There were seven-an imperial suite. In many palaces, however, such suites form a long and straight vista, while the folding doors slide back nearly to the walls on either hand, so that the view of the whole extent is scarcely impeded. Here the case was very different; as might have been expected from the duke's love of the bizarre. *The apartments were so irregularly disposed that the vision embraced but little more than one at a time. There was a sharp turn at every twenty or thirty yards, and at each turn a novel effect. To the right and left, in the middle of each wall, a tall and narrow Gothic window looked out upon a closed corridor which pursued the windings of the suite. These windows were of stained glass whose color varied in accordance with the prevailing hue of the decorations of the chamber into which it opened. That at the eastern extremity was hung, for example in blue-and vividly blue were its windows. The second chamber was purple in its ornaments and tapestries, and here the panes were purple. The third was green throughout, and so were the casements. The fourth was furnished and lighted with orange–the fifth with white-the sixth with violet. The seventh apartment was closely shrouded in black velvet tapestries that hung all over the ceiling and down the walls, falling in heavy folds upon a carpet of the same material and hue. But in this chamber only, the color of the windows failed to correspond with the decorations. The panes here were scarlet-a deep blood color. Now in no one of the seven apartments was there any lamp or candelabrum, amid the profusion of golden ornaments that lay scattered to and fro or depended from the roof. There was no light of any kind emanating from the lamp or candle within the suite of chambers. But in the corridors that followed the suite, there stood, opposite to each window, a heavy tripod, bearing a brazier of fire, that projected its rays through the tinted glass and so glaringly illumined the room. And thus were produced a multitude of gaudy and fantastic appearances. But in the western or black* *chamber the effect of the firelight that streamed upon the dark hangings through the blood-tinted panes was ghastly in the extreme, and produced so wild a look upon the countenances of those who entered, that there were few of the company bold enough to set foot within its precincts at all.*

It was in this apartment, also, that there stood against the western wall, a gigantic clock of ebony. Its pendulum swung to and fro with a dull, heavy, monotonous clang; and when the minute-hand made the circuit of the face, and the hour was to be stricken, there came from the brazen lungs of the clock a sound which was clear and loud and deep and exceedingly musical, but of so peculiar a note and emphasis that, at each lapse of an hour, the musicians of the orchestra were constrained to pause, momentarily, in their performance, to hearken to the sound; and thus the waltzers perforce ceased their evolutions; and there was a brief disconcert of the whole gay company; and, while the chimes of the clock yet rang, it was observed that the giddiest grew pale, and the more aged and sedate passed their hands over their brows as if in confused revery or meditation. But when the echoes had fully ceased, a light laughter at once pervaded the assembly; the musicians looked at each other and smiled as if at their own nervousness and folly, and made whispering vows, each to the other, that the next chiming of the clock should produce in them no similar emotion; and then, after the lapse of sixty minutes (which embrace three thousand and six hundred seconds of the Time that flies), there came yet another chiming of the clock, and then were the same disconcert and tremulousness and meditation as before.

But, in spite of these things, it was a gay and magnificent revel. The tastes of the duke were peculiar. He had a fine eye for colors and effects. He disregarded the decora *of mere fashion. His plans were bold and fiery, and his conceptions glowed with barbaric lustre. There are some who would have thought him mad. His followers felt that he was not. It was necessary to hear and see and touch him to be* sure *that he was not.*

He had directed, in great part, the movable embellishments of the seven chambers, upon occasion of this great fete*; and it was his own guiding taste which had given character to the masqueraders. Be sure they were grotesque. There were much glare and glitter and piquancy and phantasm—much of what has been since seen in "Hernani." There were arabesque figures with unsuited limbs and appointments.*

There were delirious fancies such as the madman fashions. There were much of the beautiful, much of the wanton, much of the bizarre, *something of the terrible, and not a little of that which might have excited disgust. To and fro in the seven chambers there stalked, in fact, a multitude of dreams. And these—the dreams—writhed in and about, taking hue from the rooms, and causing the wild music of the orchestra to seem as the echo of their steps. And, anon, there strikes the ebony clock which stands in the hall of the velvet. And then, for a moment, all is still, and all is silent save the voice of the clock. The dreams are stiff-frozen as they stand. But the echoes of the chime die away—they have endured but an instant—and a light, half-subdued laughter floats after them as they depart. And now again the music swells, and the dreams live, and writhe to and fro more merrily than ever, taking hue from the many-tinted windows through which stream the rays from the tripods. But to the chamber which lies most westwardly of the seven there are now none of the maskers who venture; for the night is waning away; and there flows a ruddier light through the blood-colored panes; and the blackness of the sable drapery appalls; and to him whose foot falls upon the sable carpet, there comes from the near clock of ebony a muffled peal more solemnly emphatic than any which reaches* their *ears who indulge in the more remote gaieties of the other apartments.*

But these other apartments were densely crowded, and in them beat feverishly the heart of life. And the revel went whirlingly on, until at length there commenced the sounding of midnight upon the clock. And then the music ceased, as I have told; and the evolutions of the waltzers were quieted; and there was an uneasy cessation of all things as before. But now there were twelve strokes to be sounded by the bell of the clock; and thus it happened, perhaps that more of thought crept, with more of time, into the meditations of the thoughtful among those who revelled. And thus too, it happened, perhaps, that before the last echoes of the last chime had utterly sunk into silence, there were many individuals in the crowd who had found leisure to become aware of the presence of a masked figure which had arrested the attention of no single individual before. And the rumor of this new presence having spread itself whisperingly around, there arose at length from the whole company a buzz, or murmur, expressive of disapprobation and surprise—then, finally, of terror, of horror, and of disgust.

In an assembly of phantasms such as I have painted, it may well be supposed that no ordinary appearance could have excited such sensation. In truth the masquerade license of the night was nearly unlimited; but the figure in question had out-Heroded Herod, and gone beyond the bounds of even the prince's indefinite decorum. There are chords in the hearts of the most reckless which cannot be touched without emotion.

Even with the utterly lost, to whom life and death are equally jests, there are matters of which no jest can be made. The whole company, indeed, seemed now deeply to feel that in the costume and bearing of the stranger neither wit nor propriety existed. The figure was tall and gaunt, and shrouded from head to foot in the habiliments of the grave. The mask which concealed the visage was made so nearly to resemble the countenance of a stiffened corpse that the closest scrutiny must have had difficulty in detecting the cheat. And yet all this might have been endured, if not approved, by the mad revellers around. But the mummer had gone so far as to assume the type of the Red Death. His vesture was dabbled in blood—and his broad brow, with all the features of the face, was besprinkled with the scarlet horror.

When the eyes of Prince Prospero fell upon this spectral image (which, with a slow and solemn movement, as if more fully to sustain its role, stalked to and fro among the waltzers) he was seen to be convulsed in the first moment with a strong shudder either of terror or distaste; but, in the next, his brow reddened with rage.

"Who dares"—he demanded hoarsely of the courtiers who stood near him—"who dares insult us with this blasphemous mockery? Seize him and unmask him—that we may know whom we have to hang, at sunrise, from the battlements!"

It was in the eastern or blue chamber in which stood the Prince Prospero as he uttered these words. They rang throughout the seven rooms loudly and clearly, for the prince was a bold and robust man, and the music had become hushed at the waving of his hand.

It was in the blue room where stood the prince, with a group of pale courtiers by his side. At first, as he spoke, there was a slight rushing movement of this group in the direction of the intruder, who, at the moment was also near at hand, and now, with deliberate and stately step, made closer

approach to the speaker. But from a certain nameless awe with which the mad assumptions of the mummer had inspired the whole party, there were found none who put forth hand to seize him; so that, unimpeded, he passed within a yard of the prince's person; and, while the vast assembly, as if with one impulse, shrank from the centres of the rooms to the walls, he made his way uninterruptedly, but with the same solemn and measured step, which had distinguished him from the first, through the blue chamber to the purple–through the purple to the green–through the green to the orange–through this again to the white–and even thence to the violet, ere a decided movement had been made to arrest him. It was then, however, that the Prince Prospero, maddening with rage and the shame of his own momentary cowardice, rushed hurriedly through the six chambers, while none followed him on account of a deadly terror that had seized upon all. He bore aloft a drawn dagger, and had approached, in rapid impetuosity, to within three or four feet of the retreating figure, when the latter, having attained the extremity of the velvet apartment, turned suddenly and confronted his pursuer. There was a sharp cry–and the dagger dropped gleaming upon the sable carpet, upon which, instantly afterward, fell prostrate in death the Prince Prospero. Then, summoning the wild courage of despair, a throng of the revellers at once threw themselves into the black apartment, and, seizing the mummer, whose tall figure stood erect and motionless within the shadow of the ebony clock, gasped in unutterable horror at finding the grave-cerements and corpse-like mask, which they handled with so violent a rudeness, untenanted by any tangible form.

And now was acknowledged the presence of the Red Death. He had come like a thief in the night. And one by one dropped the revellers in the blood-bedewed halls of their revel, and died each in the despairing posture of his fall. And the life of the ebony clock went out with that of the last of the gay. And the flames of the tripods expired. And Darkness and Decay and the Red Death held illimitable dominion over all.

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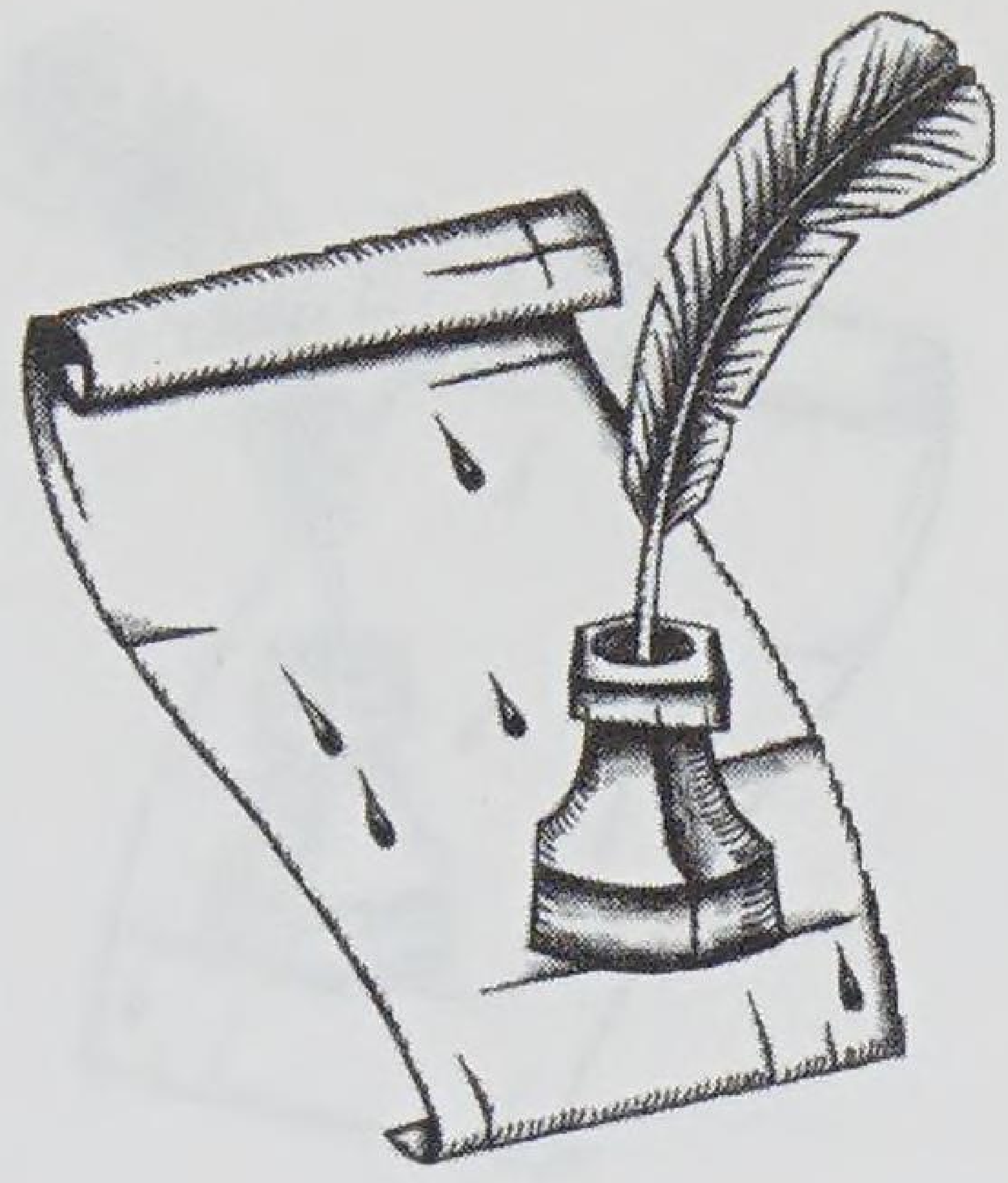

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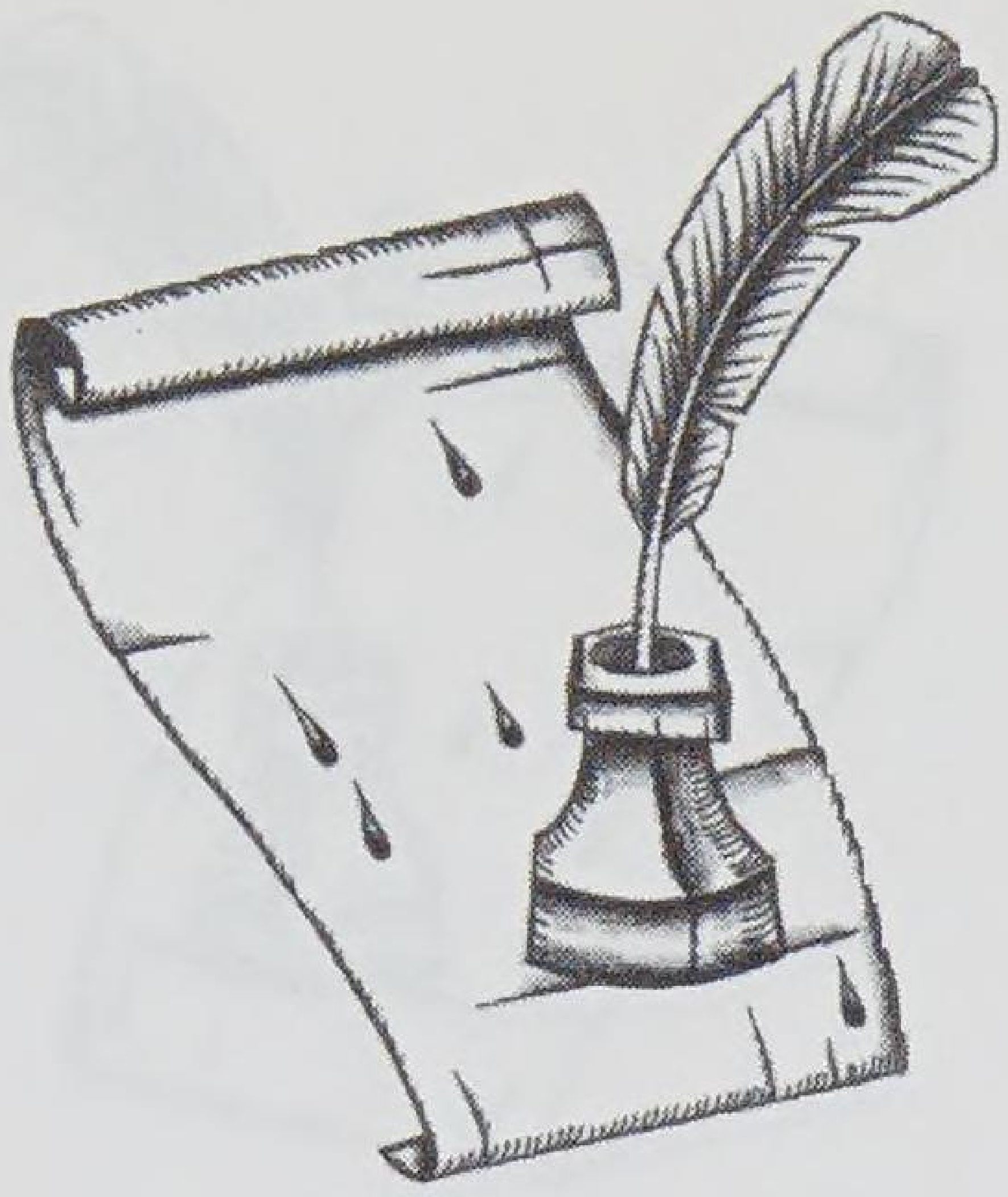

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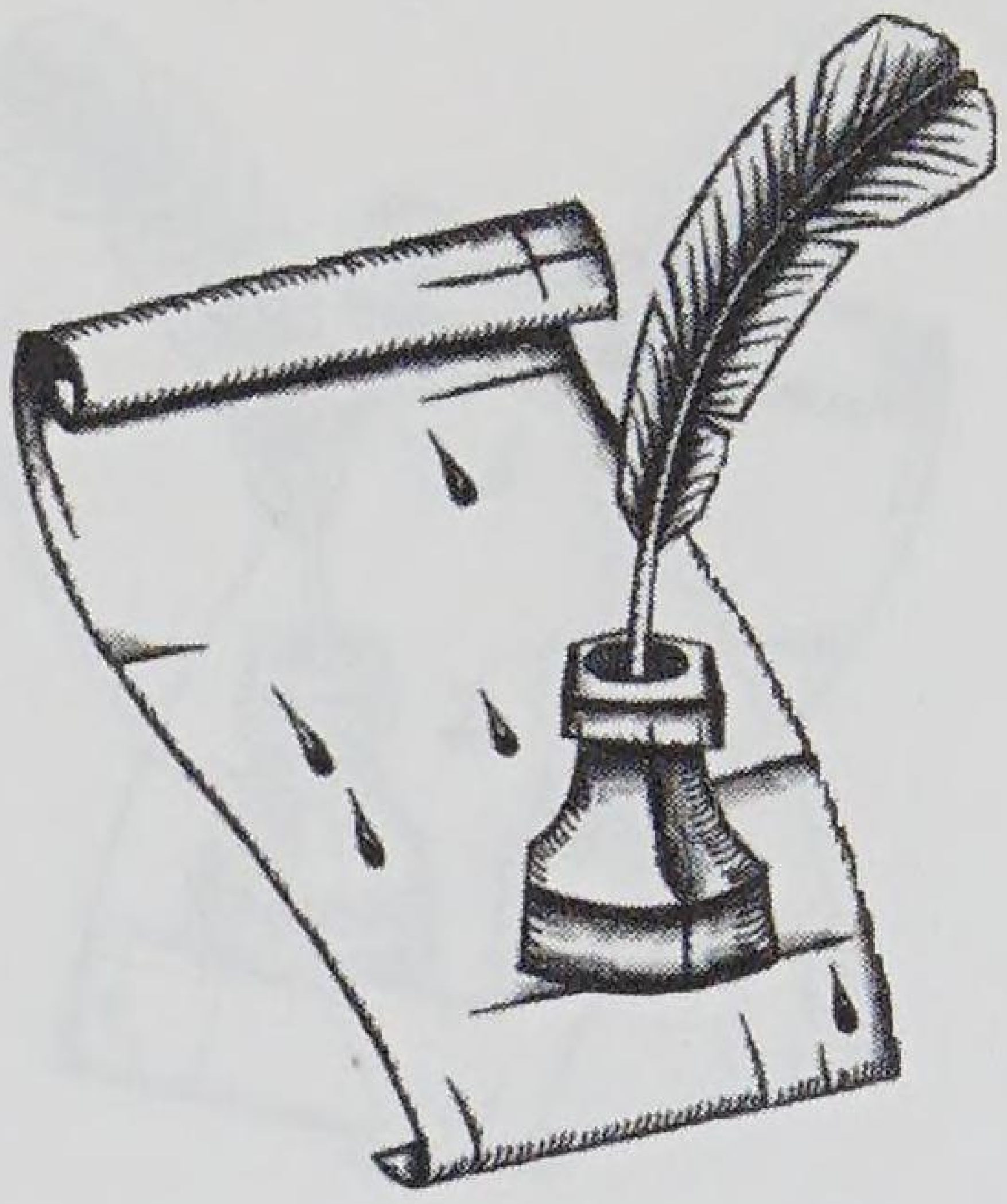

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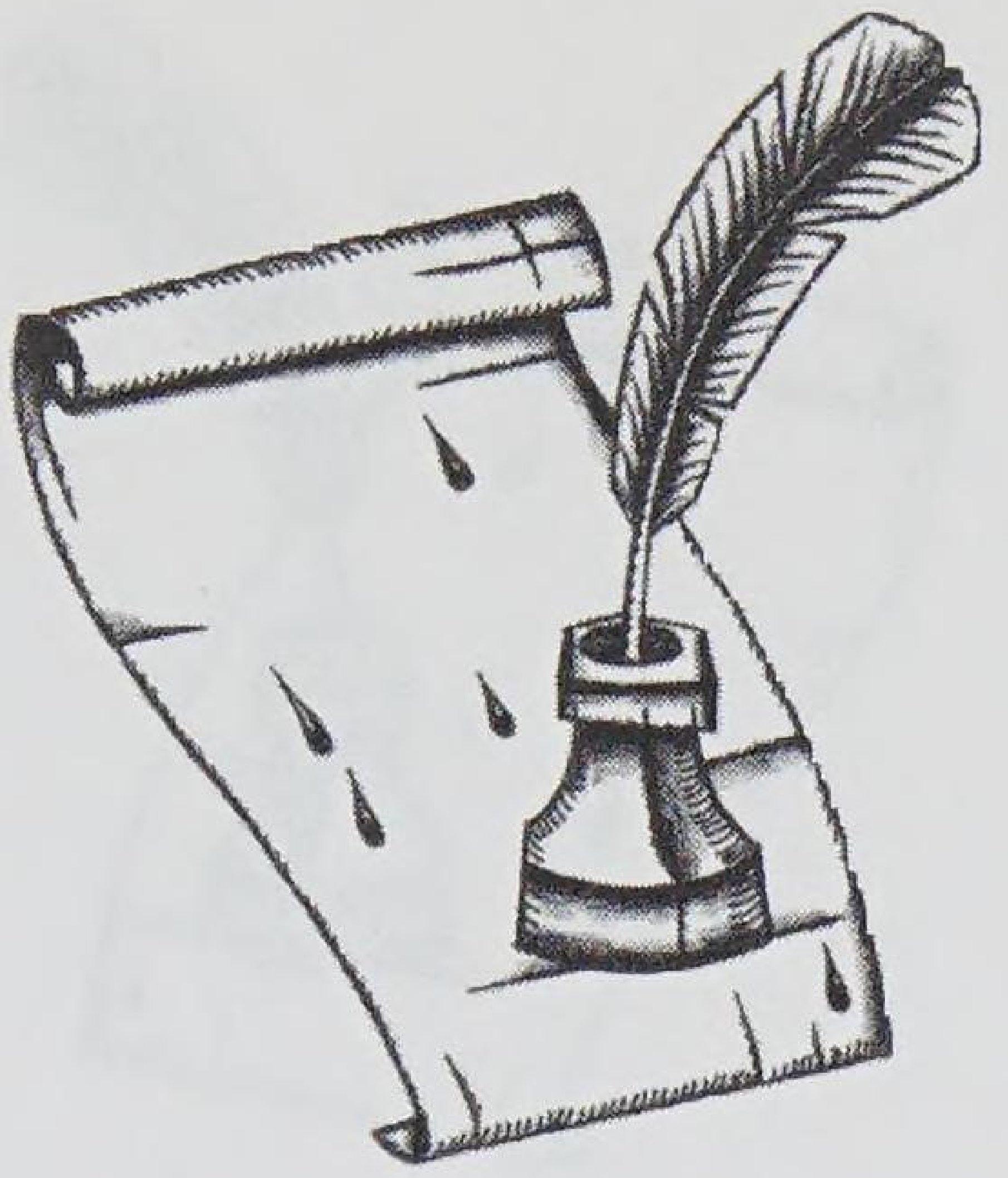

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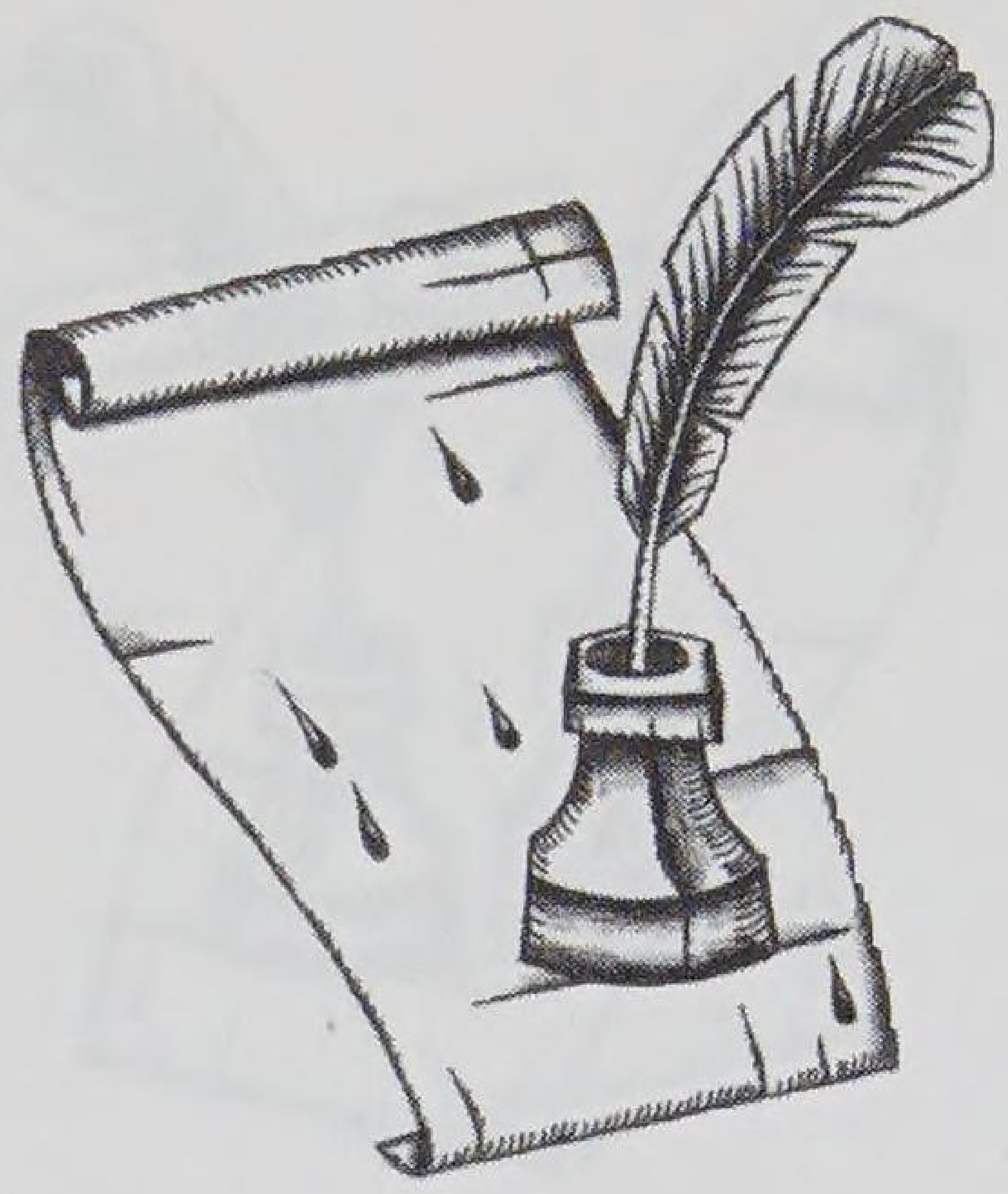

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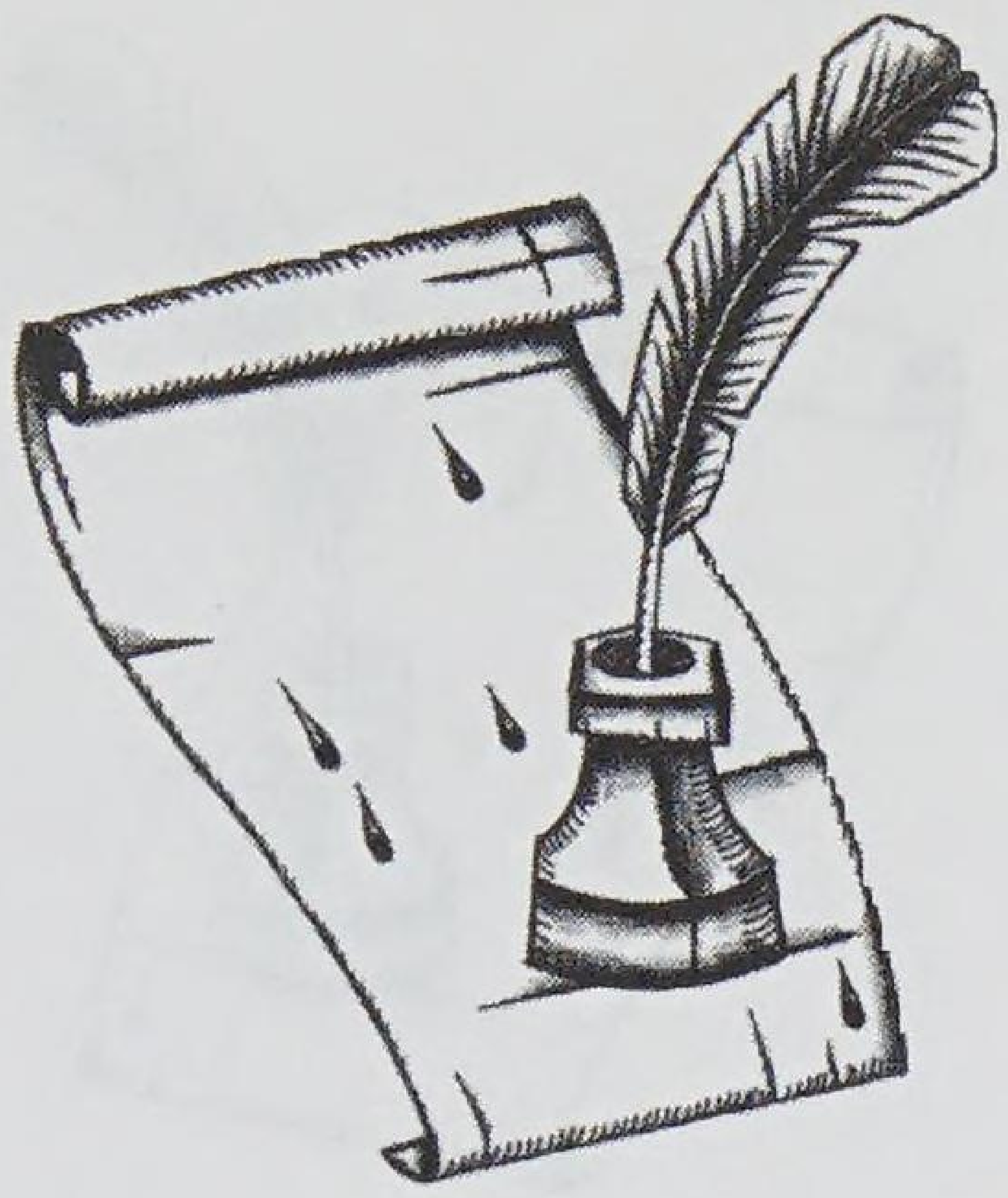

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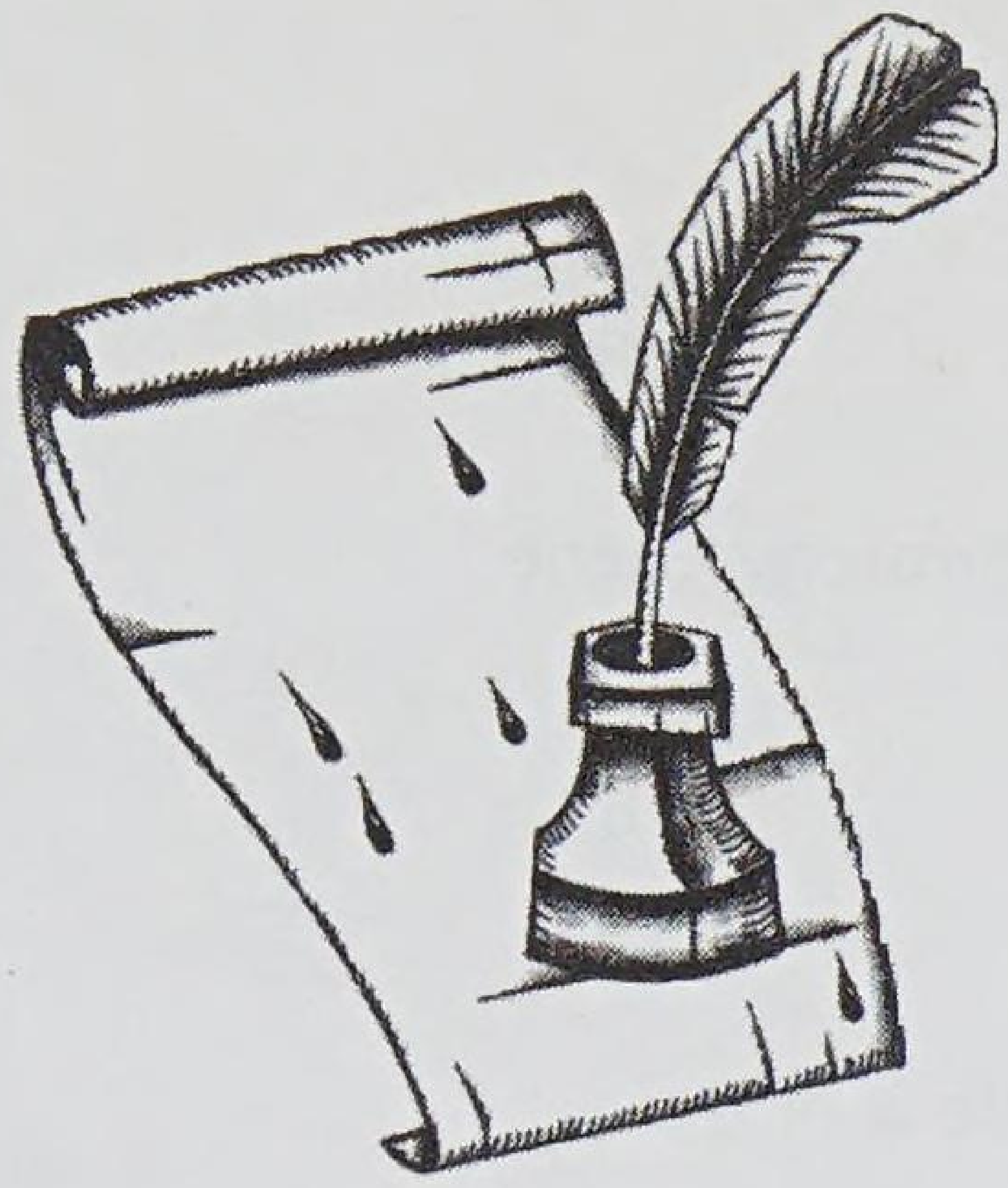

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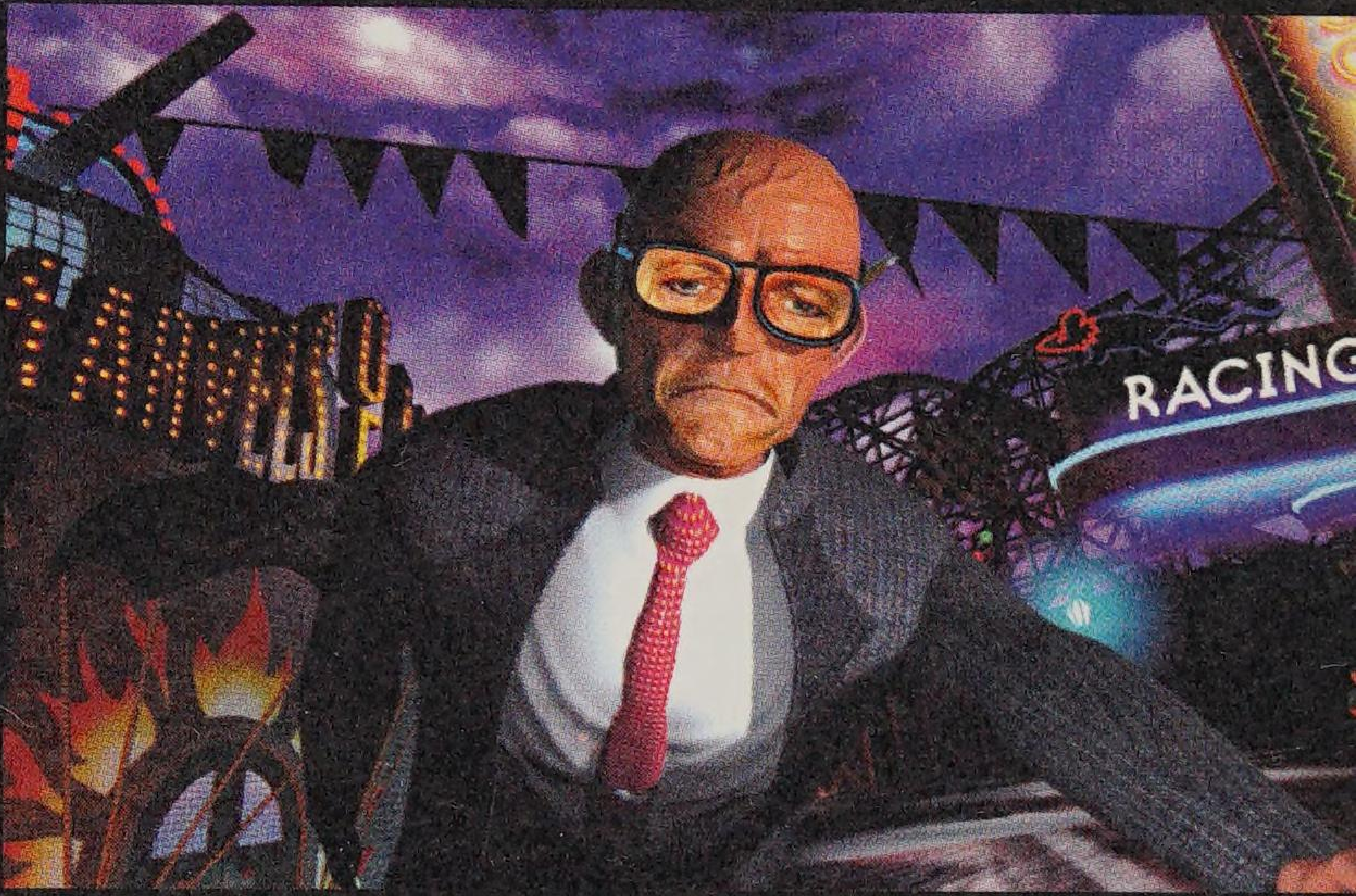

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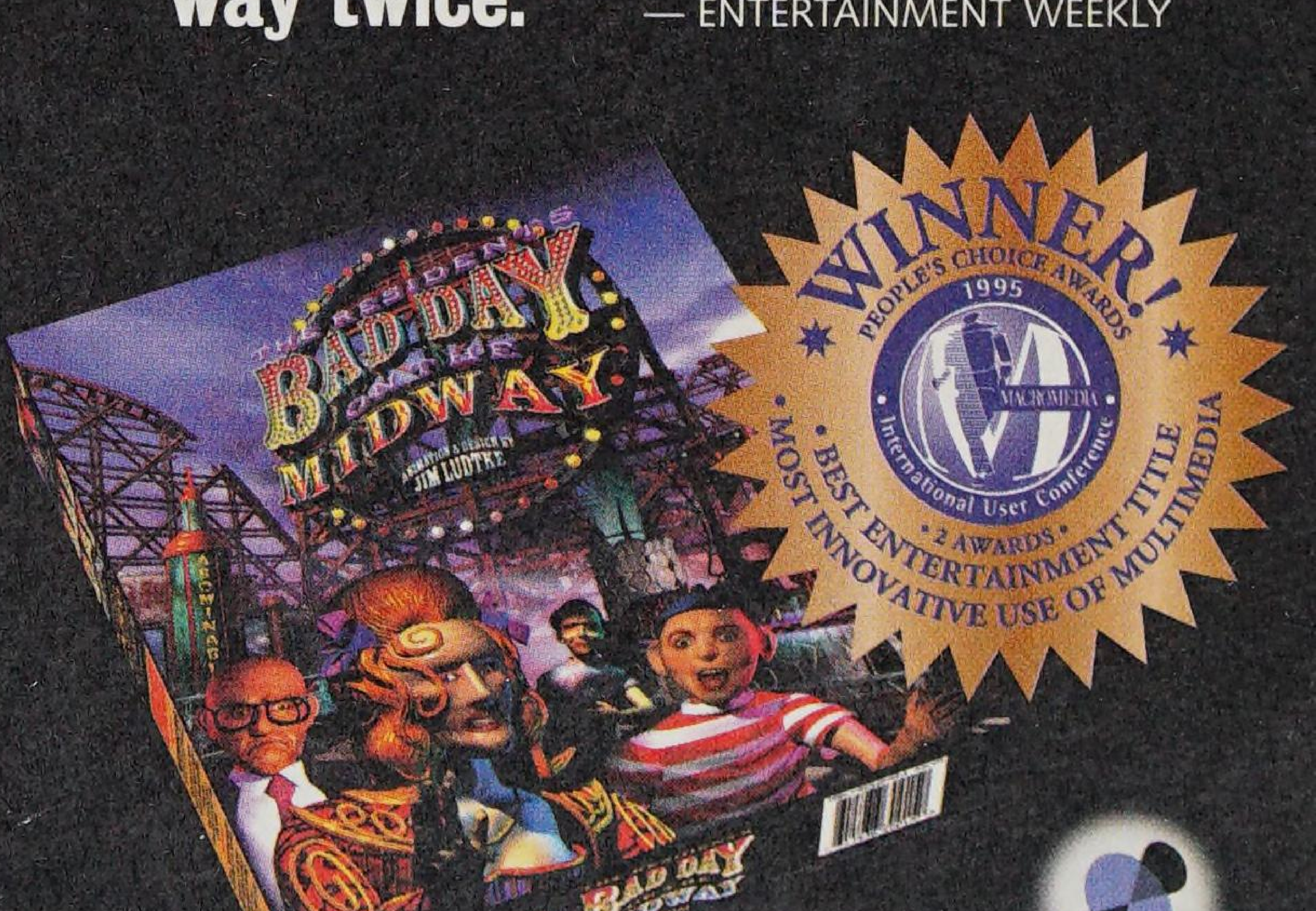
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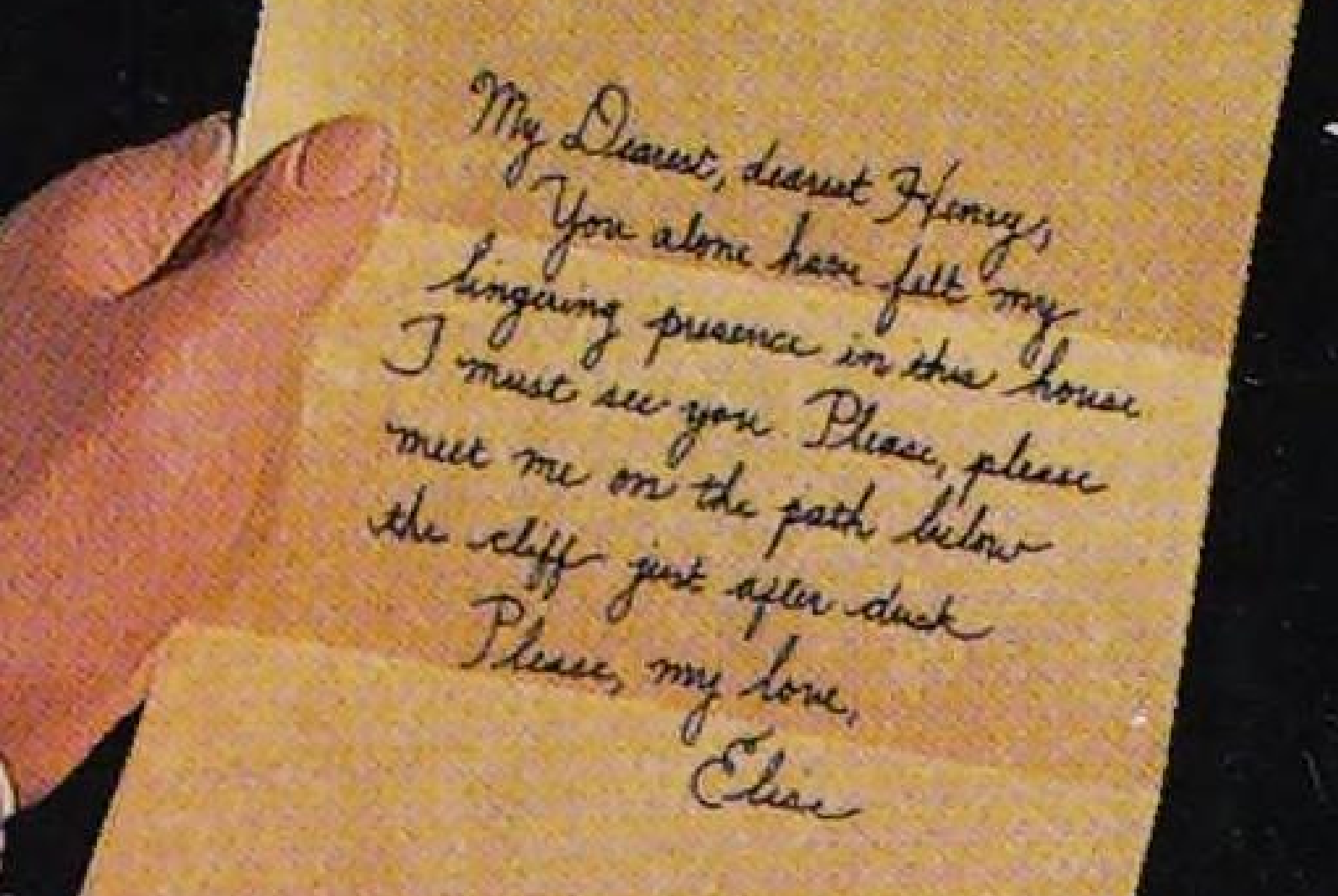

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Please, my love,
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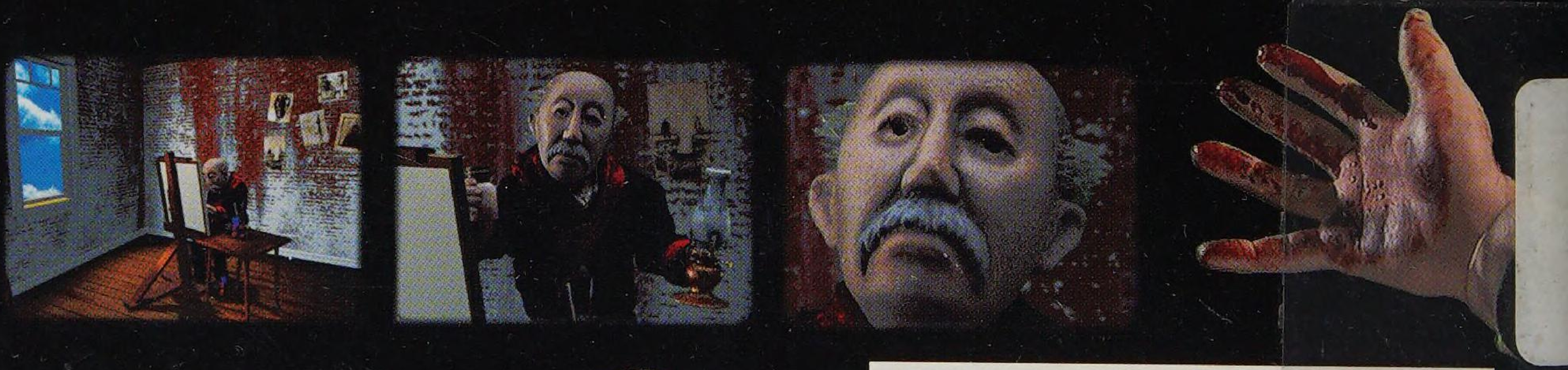

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